

**Window  
on  
Jordan**

## Tuck into your favorite dishes at Hashem!

By a Star Staff Writer

IT'S THE only place where you can find the poor and the rich sitting on one table and ordering the same kind of food—a plate of 'fool' (beans) and another of 'hummous' which is made of chick-peas.

To add a little extra flavor, there are additional condiments on the table. These include the basic items like pitta bread, onions, hot chillies (if you are lucky), and a small jug of olive oil.

You can find all this at 'Hashem', a traditional Arabic restaurant in the center of Amman. "Back in 1956, a plate of 'fool' would cost 3 to 4 piasters."

said Sameeh Hashem Al Turk, one of the sons of the man who established the restaurant. The same plate now costs 27.5 piasters (275 Fils).

This restaurant is one of the primary features of the capital, and has been an eye witness to the many events that occurred in the region. "I remember once during the September troubles in the early 1970s. We woke up to find a number of dead bodies outside our front door—one of them was badly wounded, but we managed to save him," said Al Turk.

Although situated in a very narrow alley, Hashem works around the clock. It even sends out

deliveries. All sorts of people come to the restaurant. "We receive between 800-900 customers a day," and the noise these customers generated made it difficult to hear Mr Al Turk sometimes. As soon as one table emptied, it was quickly re-occupied.

Hashem has become a famous landmark throughout the years, especially among tourists, who delight in tasting traditional Arab food at non-tourist prices.

"Many of the tourists who come to Jordan, read

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**Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly**

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

## Peace process increases discontent

Ibtisam Awadat

Star Staff Writer

A SUMMIT was held in Washington this week, between the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and the US President Bill Clinton. A statement from President Clinton after the conclusion of the meetings, indicated that nothing had been achieved, but that a date for another meeting was scheduled for the 15 October.

"I don't consider the summit a failure, but neither is it a big success," said Dr As'ad Abdel Rahman, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

"The achievement was in forcing Israel to comply with

the commitments made during earlier negotiations, including Israeli withdrawal from 13 percent of the West Bank," he said. Arafat announced his approval of this withdrawal last Tuesday, despite the designation of three percent of this area as a nature reserve.

The second success for the Palestinian negotiating team was the failure of the Israeli prime minister to admit to an Israeli-Zionist terrorist threat to Palestine.

"We insisted that any relationship should be equal, and based on reciprocity, and that before they call on Palestinians to combat terrorism, they had to confess that there was an Israeli and Zionist terrorist threat to Pal-



Dr As'ad Abdel Rahman

estine," continued Dr Abdel Rahman, who is in charge of the refugee file at the Pales-

tinian National Authority.

"We do not have much confidence in Netanyahu's government either, as we feel that their intentions are not genuine, and that they are against peace in general, and the Oslo Accord in particular," Abdel Rahman explained.

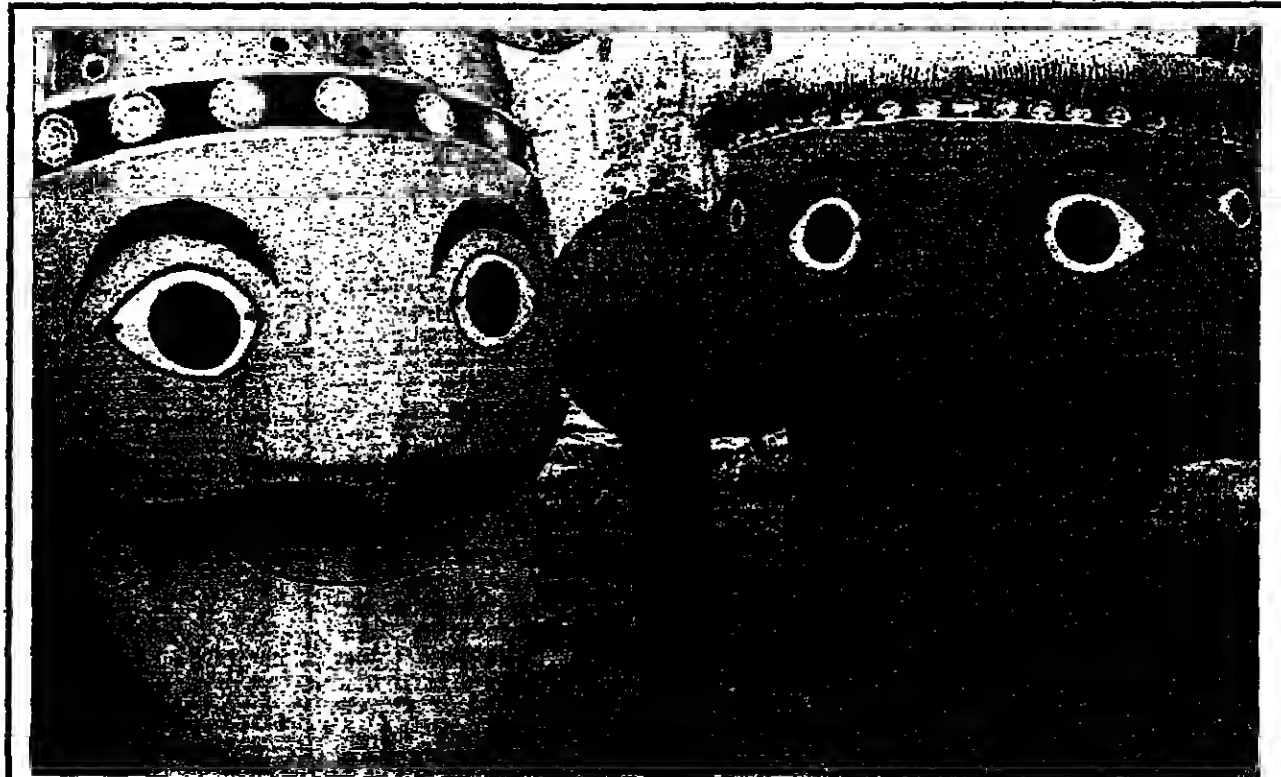
Many support Arafat in his stand to force Israel to comply with all the previous accords and agreements. "I hope that we will accomplish all the conditions outlined in the interim period: like the release of the prisoners, securing a path for future negotiations, the establishment of the Gaza airport, as well as the implementation of all the American initiatives," Dr Abdel Rahman told *The Star*.

Assuming that all this has been achieved, the Palestinians will then be ready to enter into the negotiations set out in the third stage of the Oslo Accords, which is to reach an agreement on a comprehensive, accurate, and final peace.

All this is going on amidst growing resentment from Palestinians and Israeli Arabs for peace process, which they consider to be more of a burden than a help to realizing their aspirations. The latest riots in Umm Al Fahm and in Nazareth testify to this mood. "Whilst we meet around the negotiating table, our people are fighting real battles on the ground," Abdel Rahman added.

Jordanians and Palestinians are frustrated at the Israeli obstinacy, and the continued one-sided support from the Americans. "During our meetings with American officials, it was obvious that they were not prepared to put any pressure on Israel," said Dr Labih Qumhaw, a political analyst.

"and this leaves the Palestinians with only one alternative, and that is to declare the peace process dead. Their is no reciprocity in the negotiations at the moment, as the only party giving up rights are the Palestinians," said Qar-



An artist puts finishing touches to effigies of demon-king Ravana on the eve of the Hindu festival of Dussehra in New Delhi September 30. Dussehra, which falls on 1 October, marks the triumph of Hindu god-king Ram over the demon-king Ravana, whose effigy will be burnt to signify the triumph of good over evil. REUTERS

## Vaccines cause a state of chaos among schools

By Ilham Sadeq

Star Staff Writer

DESPITE ASSURANCES from the Ministry of Health, the number of school children reacting to the recent tetanus and typhoid vaccinations in schools around Amman, Zarqa and Koura has escalated. Dr Nael Al Ajlani, the Minister of Health, visited the pupils who were taken to hospital, and set up an investigation committee to get to the root of the problem. The results will be made available after a week.

Some sources doubt whether the Ministry of Health's laboratories have the facilities and expertise to validate the suspect vaccines. This only increases tension among Jordanian families, who have become skeptical about all vaccinations. Some even have told their children not to take the injections.

In a precautionary measure, the Ministry of Health is stopping the vaccination process until the results of the investigations are known. At the start of each school year,



Concerned mothers rushing to school after hearing the news of the vaccination crisis.

the Ministry of Education launches an inoculation campaign in all public schools. This time, however, things did not go as planned.

After taking the tetanus and typhoid injections a few days ago, around 160 students developed symptoms of dizziness. Some even fainted directly after receiving

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## Low expectations for Middle East Summit

By Rebecca Trounson

JERUSALEM—Now that Israeli and Palestinian leaders have agreed to a high-stakes Washington summit next month, the question arises: What chance is there that the talks will restore significant momentum and vitality to a peace process that has been paralyzed for nearly 19 months?

The answer appears to be: not much.

Given President Clinton's weakened status, the profound distrust between Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu, and the many thorny issues confronting them, observers were skeptical that any real progress is on the horizon.

"There's nothing that's happened in the last year—or the last couple days—that indicates anything like that is going to happen," said Gerald

Steinberg, a political studies professor at Bar Ilan University in Tel Aviv. "The odds are going to be very, very low."

Nonetheless, the mid-October summit proposed by Clinton could, at long last, produce a deal for Israel to withdraw its troops from another chunk of the occupied West Bank in exchange for tougher Palestinian actions to fight terrorism. "That alone is nothing to scoff at."

"Any agreement that comes out at this point will be a shadow of what it could or should have been, if it was signed a year ago," said Hebrew University political scientist Yaron Ezrahi. "But such an agreement is far better than none."

Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, and Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president, already have accepted part of a US initiative for the withdrawal. After months of US-brokered negotiations, they now agree that Israel will cede an additional 13 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians in the redeployment, although 3 percent of that area will be designated a "nature reserve" with special restrictions.

However, the partial agreement was not announced at joint news conference Monday at the White House, evidently because neither man trusts that the other will actually follow through. Instead, the pair stood, unsmiling, on either side of Clinton and did not acknowledge each other or shake hands during their brief appearance.

On Tuesday, Arafat emerged from a separate meeting with Clinton to confirm that the Palestinians accept the idea of the nature reserve as long as it is designated part of an existing category of West Bank land that Israelis and Palestinians call "Area B," in which Palestinians have control over civil matters and Israelis have responsibility for security.

After months of impasse, both Arafat and Netanyahu have reasons to try to strike a deal now, if only to earn the



gratitude of the troubled US leader at a critical juncture in his presidency. A Middle East accord would give Clinton a high-profile foreign policy success even as his domestic political troubles mount.

"They've got the opportunity to endow themselves to the president of the United States forever and ever by going for this," a US official said last week. "There's got to be some interest in that."

Both leaders have other reasons for moving forward. For Arafat, it's the opportunity to add more land, albeit less than he had hoped, to the parameters of the Palestinian state he plans to declare in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as early as next May. For Netanyahu, it's the chance to get a more detailed, concrete plan from the Palestinians on fighting anti-Israeli extremists than has existed before, allowing him to tell Israelis that he has kept a campaign promise to achieve

"peace with security."

For months, Netanyahu has insisted that the Palestinians take more concerted action against Islamic militant groups that have launched numerous deadly attacks against Israel from areas under Palestinian control. His concerns were underscored Tuesday when an explosion in a car near the West Bank city of Ramallah left one man dead and two others wounded. Palestinian police said the three were members of the militant Islamic group Hamas and may have been for an attack in Israel during the Yom Kippur holiday, the Jewish day of atonement, which began at sundown on Tuesday.

But the two leaders must also weigh the domestic political risks they would face in allowing progress in peace negotiations to be vehemently opposed by extremists and oth-

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## Iraq reportedly working towards A-Bomb

By Barton Gellman

WASHINGTON—United Nations arms inspectors reported twice to the United States, in 1996 and 1997, that they had credible intelligence indicating that Iraq built and has maintained three or four "implosion devices" that lack only cores of enriched uranium to make 20-kiloton nuclear weapons, according to US government and UN sources.

American intelligence assessments, US officials said Tuesday, concur on the credibility of the reports but have not fully corroborated them. If Iraq has in fact managed to manufacture such devices—in essence, the shells of nuclear weapons without the atomic cores—it is substantially closer than previously known to joining the world's nuclear powers, according to the LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

There is no known evidence that the Baghdad government has acquired plutonium or highly enriched uranium, without which its weapons design cannot be completed. Many experts, including those

in the US government, regard the nuclear supply problem as a higher hurdle for aspiring weapons builders than fabrication of the shell of precision-shaped conventional charges that would be used to detonate the fissile material.

But the existence of weapons shells would be a milestone for Iraq and raise new questions about the policies and public assessments of the Clinton administration and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is responsible for investigating any evidence that Iraq is violating a ban on its nuclear weapons program. Since 1996, the Vienna-based panel has reported regularly to the UN Security Council that it has found "no indication of prohibited equipment, materials or activities."

A cache of undiscovered implosion devices would also illuminate the stakes involved in Iraq's refusal since August 3 to permit UN inspectors to mount new searches for banned materials. US officials acknowledged that there is little prospect of discovering and destroying such devices without the active pro-

gram of surprise inspections that has now been terminated.

Reports of the implosion devices were first aired publicly by Scott Ritter, a former Marine who has been critical of US government policy since he resigned from the UN Special Commission, or UNSCOM, in August. After Ritter testified about the devices to Senate and House committees on September 4 and September 15, senior US policymakers said the government had never received such a report from UNSCOM and did not regard the claims as credible.

Both those assertions are contradicted by evidence emerging this week. In interviews and in documents made available to The Washington Post, US government and United Nations sources confirmed that Ritter passed the intelligence orally to the Central Intelligence Agency's Nonproliferation Center in 1996 and in writing in May 1997 to an interagency group supporting the weapons inspectors. Some senior administration officials disputed Tuesday that there is any reason to

regard the UNSCOM intelligence as credible. But those US officials most responsible for assessing the reports said in interviews that they believed the findings are plausible. "It is credible that they (Iraqi designers) have all the parts to put together," one of the officials said Tuesday. "Do I think there might be parts out there that could provide the basis to put together several weapons? Yeah."

Ritter's original information, according to accounts he gave the US government, was compiled from three Iraqi defectors. Ritter later told the IAEA, according to other sources, that the defector information came to UNSCOM by way of a "northern European" country.

It was not clear from the defectors, sources said, whether the devices would meet Iraq's design goal of fitting inside the 88-centimeter (roughly 34-inch) warhead of a Scud missile. At 20 kilotons, the expected yield of the devices would be greater than that of the first atomic bomb, a 13-kiloton device dropped by the United States on Hiroshima in 1945.

هكذا من النحل



## King receives top Kuwaiti envoy and thanks Saudi Prince

WASHINGTON (Petra)—His Majesty King Hussein received at his residence in Washington the Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Sabah, who inquired about His Majesty's health and wished him a speedy recovery.

The Kuwaiti Minister delivered to His Majesty, greetings of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jabir Al Ahmed Al Sabah. The King and Sheikh Sabah discussed brotherly ties between Jordan and Kuwait.

The meeting was attended by Jordan's Ambassador to the US, Dr. Marwan Muasher and the Kuwaiti Ambassador in Washington, Sheikh Mohammed Al Sabah.

Meanwhile, the King sent a cable to Saudi Crown Prince, Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation to Prince Abdullah and members of the Royal Saudi family for the true and noble feelings of brotherhood, expressed during their visit to the King.

"I will never forget those true and noble feelings," the King said in his message. His Majesty expressed his deep joy over the invitation extended to him by Prince Abdullah to visit Saudi Arabia and perform Umrah (the smaller pilgrimage), after his recovery and safe return home.

The King said he appreciated the noble gesture of the members of the Royal Saudi family, who accompanied Prince Abdullah.

## Child song festival gets standing ovation



Majda Al Roumi, with her daughter



HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal opening the festival

AMMAN (Star)—Deputizing for Her Majesty Queen Noor, HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal inaugurated the Fourth Jordanian Children's Song Festival. Both Minister of Culture, Talaat Sata'o Al Hassan, and Minister of Information, Nasser Joudeh, attended the opening ceremony, which took place at the Royal Cultural Center this week. Well-known Lebanese singer Majda Al Roumi also attended as a guest of honor.

Mr Sata'o Al Hassan said that his Ministry is giving this year's festival top priority. Over 100 children from all

over the region participated in a ceremony that represented their dreams for Arab unity.

Speaking on the eve of the festival, Al Roumi said, "We should all be aware of the needs of the child, to let them express their talents, and allow them to express their ideas freely."

As children are the ones who suffer the most from wars and political differences, Al Roumi paid tribute to those youngsters in occupied Palestine and Southern Lebanon, who are tirelessly standing up for their rights.

Al Roumi would not be drawn when questioned about producing songs especially for children. She said that, "This type of song needs specialization, and they have to be of a certain standard to convey the right message to Arab children."

During the opening ceremony, many children performed an operetta about Algeria, where human massacres have become an everyday reality. "It's unbelievable; the people there must share our concern for finding an end to the crisis."

She urged every one interested in this kind of art, to produce more songs for children, so as to shed light on their difficulties in Palestine, Lebanon, and other Arab countries.

Princess Alia opened a cartoon art show for children, which was organized by the Arab Child's Development Council. Other activities include seminars and exhibitions by academics and experts from Jordan and abroad. The festival continues until October 10.

There was a good attendance at this year's festival

## For the Record

### Prince Hassan receives Saudi Qaddafi

AMMAN (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received Al Saïd Muammar Qaddafi—the son of Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi—the head of the Football Federation in Libya. Qaddafi conveyed the greetings of President Muammar Qaddafi to His Majesty King Hussein and to Prince Hassan, expressing wishes for a speedy recovery and safe return of the King. Prince Hassan asked Qaddafi to convey his greetings to President Muammar Qaddafi, stressing Jordan's keenness to develop relations with Libya. Qaddafi expressed Libyan keenness to develop cooperation with Jordan, particularly in the economic and health fields.

### Beitaji meets French Ambassador

AMMAN (Petra)—Minister of Tourism, Aqel Beitaji, met French Ambassador to Amman, Bernard Enrie, on Monday for talks on tourist cooperation between the two countries. The two sides discussed France's aid to Jordan to help set up a museum in Jerash, establishing nature reserves and classifying tourist hotels according to latest international criteria. The talks focused on the current preparations for the Tourism Ministry's campaign in France, designed to promote Jordan's tourism through a comprehensive program. Beitaji visited France on 8 October, for talks with French officials on tourist cooperation between the two countries.

### Jordan and Europe to strengthen ties

AMMAN (Petra)—Jordan took part in meetings of the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean countries, which was held in the Netherlands during 22-25 September, with a view to reaching a formula for programs of cooperation between countries of the European Union and the Mediterranean. Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry of Social Development, Omar Hussein, who represented Jordan in the conference said, "The meetings discussed a working plan on social work strategies, and a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Social Development and the Dutch Ministry of Health and Health Care was approved recently." The meeting also touched upon means of enhancing cooperation between Jordan and the Netherlands in family and child related issues.

### Crown Prince holds reception

Amman (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court on Tuesday the participants of the Kings Way International Bike Race, which runs from Kerak to the south of Jordan. The race, which is held in Jordan for the first time, is organized by the French Nature Development Institution in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and aims to promote tourism in the Southern part of Jordan. In all, there are 30 participants from France, Belgium and Jordan. His Royal Highness congratulated the participants on their achievements, expressing his happiness for holding the race in Jordan. The meeting was attended by the Ministers of Youth and Culture, and Information, as well as the Tourism and Antiquities Secretary General and the French Ambassador to Jordan.

## Tuck into your favorite dishes

Continued from page 1

about us in their travel books about the Kingdom. I myself have no idea when and where these were published," Mr Al Turk continued.

He added, "Jordanian students who study abroad know about us. One old man started to eat here after his son—who studies in Algeria—told him about Hashem." The student misses this kind of food, and recommended that his father to eat.

Hashem evokes memory. On the walls, there are pictures of some of the well known personalities who have visited. One is of former Amman Mayor, Dr Mamdouh Abbadi. Others in-

clude the famous Iraqi singer Karam Al Saher, and the Lebanese singer/composer Milham Barakat, who frequently visits Hashem whenever he is in Amman.

Many articles have been written by journalists about Hashem over the years. Some have come to regard it as their meeting place.

Due to its popularity, it has just opened another branch on Makka Street. "It has become very difficult to receive our customers now, especially as we have some regulars who have been coming here since the 1940s and 1970s," commented Al Turk. The times they are changing.

"I remember how we were the only restaurant on this spot, near the Philadelphia Hotel. After a heavy meal, the tourist would go back to the hotel for a rest." But now access to the restaurant, especially by car, has become very difficult.

However, the situation is different in Makka Street. "I received the Minister of Finance and the Director of Jordan Television a couple of days ago," Al Turk continued, "and we have more young women eating here, as it's somewhat uncomfortable for them to eat in our central restaurant downtown, where the clientele is predominantly male."

## Vaccines cause a state of chaos among schools

Continued from page 1

sons, whilst others complained of low blood pressure. Similar symptoms were observed on other students the next day. The total number of students who were vaccinated was 160,000.

"It is clear that there is something wrong. It could be a labeling error, showing a different dose percentage, or it could be a mistake in the storage of the vaccines," former Health Minister, Dr Abdel Raheem Malhas, told The Star.

If it is revealed that the problem was a storage or labeling error, then Dr Malhas blames the health authorities for not enfor-

cAll medications have an expiry date written on the label, but wrong storage techniques or a change in temperature can render the drug ineffective even before it expires.

"There is what we call a 'cold chain', which should be maintained from the factory (where the drug or injection is prepared) until it reaches the consumer. If this chain is broken, the product can be rendered useless," Dr Malhas elaborated.

The tetanus and typhoid vaccines were donated to Jordan by UNICEF, free of charge. "It is our duty to examine all drugs, especially those that have been donated," Dr Malhas stressed, "ing stricter supervision. The

vaccines were due to expire in November, but as already mentioned, the correct storage and labelling of the drugs is essential. Dr Mohammad Al Khatib, director of the Zarka Hospital told The Star that, "Among the 150 children that were admitted to hospital because of the vaccinations, only one remains under observation." Dr Al Khatib avails the results of the investigations with interest.

Sharing this view is the Secretary-General of the Jordan Medical Association, who shares the same name, Dr Mohammad Al Khatib. "I don't think that the problem was caused by the poor adminis-

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## Peace process increases discontent

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hawi, who urged all the Arab countries to declare the peace process dead.

This declaration is the only way we can get our message across, and it will give us then the right to practice alternative methods of ending Israeli occupation," Qumhawi continued. "Our struggle cannot then be classified as 'terrorism,' as it will be a struggle by an occupied country, seeking its independence," he added.

"There is now a race against time, since the Oslo Accords stated that final negotiations were to be completed by May 1999," said Dr Thiyab Makhadmeh, professor of Political Science at the University of Jordan, "and that by this date, the dream of

a Palestinian state has to be fulfilled."

Some political analysts are saying that there is no mention in the Oslo Accords for the establishment of a Palestinian state. In response to this, Makhadmeh said, "there are elements of a state in existence already, and in the Oslo agreement we can find texts referring to Gaza and West Bank as being one geographic unit."

In addition, "there is a statement that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians." He added that the only real way of achieving a lasting peace is to involve all the interested parties, which means addressing the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian issues at the same time.

## Low expectations for Middle East summit

Continued from page 1

ers on both sides. Netanyahu faces strong opposition from Jewish settlers and from some members of his own coalition government, who have threatened to bolt if he signs a West Bank agreement. On Tuesday, lawmaker Haneen Porat, a member of the National Religious Party and the chairman of a key parliamentary committee, said he would speed passage of a bill to dissolve the government and force early elections if Netanyahu agrees to the pailous.

Recent media reports that Netanyahu might soon name Ariel Sharon, a hawkish Cabinet member and former general, to the open post of foreign minister were widely viewed here as attempts to calm the right wing before an

expected withdrawal.

Arafat, in turn, must contend with opposition from extremist Islamic groups, including Hamas, as well as a Palestinian public that is increasingly disillusioned with the 5-year-old peace process; many Palestinians argue that it has not significantly improved their lives.

"People don't see a lot of change," said Palestinian political science professor Ali Jirbawi of Birzeit University in the West Bank. "There are still Israeli roadblocks and checkpoints. The occupation is still here."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## Inter.Con hosts meeting

HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL Jordan is hosting the Sales and Marketing meeting for all Directors of Sales and Marketing of InterContinental Hotels & Resorts in the Middle East and Africa region, headed by Mr Stephen Banks, between 3-7 October 1998. This yearly event is organized by the InterContinental Hotels & Resorts and this is the first meeting held at the Hotel InterContinental Jordan since 1980. The participants will also attend a course on Advanced Strategic selling, organized by Mercuri International.

Hotel InterContinental Jordan has planned an exciting programme for the participants to experience the unique attributes of Jordanian hospitality.

## World-wide car venue in Paris

AIR FRANCE is pleased to draw your attention to the Paris Motor Show, which will be held in Paris—Porte de Versailles Exhibition Hall between 1-11 October. This exhibition, which takes place every two years, is one of the most famous in the world and among other exhibitions regularly held in Paris. Air France will take you directly to Paris to the most comfortable way with the Espace and Tempo cabins. Air France operates four non-stop flights to Paris out of Amman, departing at the most convenient time of the day 7:30 (winter time 6:30) and arriving in Paris just before mid-day. At Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, Air France offers you a choice of connections to more than 200 destinations in the world.

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## JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional  
report on Jordanian  
news and views edited  
by Marwan Al Asmar

## Royal Decree

A Royal Decree was issued this week delaying the ordinary session of the Lower House of Parliament until 28 November. This is according to Paragraph 1 of article 78 of the Constitution. Deputy Mahmoud Al Kharabsheh, rapporteur of the Legal Committee, said the House was due to start its session as from 1 November. However, His Majesty King Hussein has the power to delay the reconvening for a further two months. Kharabsheh added that if the King is absent from the country for more than four months, or not able to practice his duties, then the Lower House would have the right to meet to discuss the issue. He said that by 14 November, the King would have been out of the country for four months. He added that if the King doesn't return before that time, then the Lower House would have to hold an extraordinary session for at least one or two days.

## No price hike for fuel

Dr Hani Al Miki, Minister of Energy said that the prices of fuel—gas and kerosene oils—will not be increased this winter. The minister, who also holds the water portfolio, said that Jordan has a good stock of these oils, and added that gas cylinders are readily available on the market.

## Changes at State Security

Prime Minister Dr Fayez Al Tarawneh is making a number of changes at the State Security Court. Military judge Colonel Youssef Faour now becomes the President of the Court. Majors Tayel Al Raghad, Ahmed Al Hrabshah, Abdul Al Kareem Hmaad, Hussien Al Tarawneh, Ahmed Al Omash have been appointed as judges in the court. In addition, Majors Youssef Al Adwan and Naef Masaad will become the next Attorney General's of the court. Their assistants will be Majors Mohamed Hejazi and Mahmoud Obidat.

## Journalists

Rapporteur of the Public Liberties Committee of the Lower House, Mohammad Al Azaideh, called on the authorities to revoke the lawsuits against journalists. He said that there are currently around 50 to 70 lawsuits pending against journalists in Jordan. Al Azaideh said the file against the press must be closed.

## Viagra

Minister of Health Dr Naef Al Ajlouni stressed that the Viagra potency pill is still forbidden in Jordan. He said that before it can go on the market in the country it would have to be evaluated by specialized committees to see whether it has any side effects on human health.



## New Japanese diplomat praises Middle East

TOKYO (Petra)—Newly-appointed Director of the Middle East and North Africa desk at the Japanese Foreign Ministry Takahiro Kajawa paid tribute to the new tendencies of economic openness and flexibility in the Middle Eastern countries, particularly in Jordan.

"Such positive changes in the region's economies will help develop economic and trade relations between Japan and the countries in the region," Kajawa said in an interview with a Petra correspondent in Tokyo.

Kajawa said, "Japan's basic stand would not change and oil supplies from the region will remain Japan's top priorities. However, we view the Middle East as a very important region, politically and economically, not only for Japan but for the entire world."

The Japanese diplomat said establishing peace in the Middle East has gained regional and international importance. "Therefore we have supported the peace process ever since it was launched in Madrid and later in Oslo," he added. He said that Japan is interested in developing its relations with the region, not only in the economic field, but in industrial and cultural areas as well.

"That is why Japan provides these countries with our expertise and advanced technologies," he said, "but there is an intricate interrelationship between the economic and political problems, and it is

clear that settling political issues is vital for improving economies, because companies always fear political instability."

On the stalled Middle East peace process, Kajawa said that things were not moving in the right direction, but that the peace process was not dead. "There is room to maneuver by both parties, and a breakthrough can be reached," he added. "The next year will be crucial for us all, because the implementation of the self-rule agreement should begin by May 5th 1999."

Tangible progress must be achieved before this date, otherwise we will be facing a dangerous situation," Kajawa said. On Jordan's stand regarding the policy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, Kajawa said, "We hope that Netanyahu will be more flexible, because this is what is required to reactivate the peace process."

He (Netanyahu) should take decisions to conclude the peace process before May 4th," the Japanese official said.

"We share the Arab states concern about Israel's nuclear capabilities as well," he said. Israel declined to sign international treaties banning the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Japanese diplomat denied as groundless news reports on cooperation between Japan and Israel, to develop the Israeli anti-missile Arrow missile.

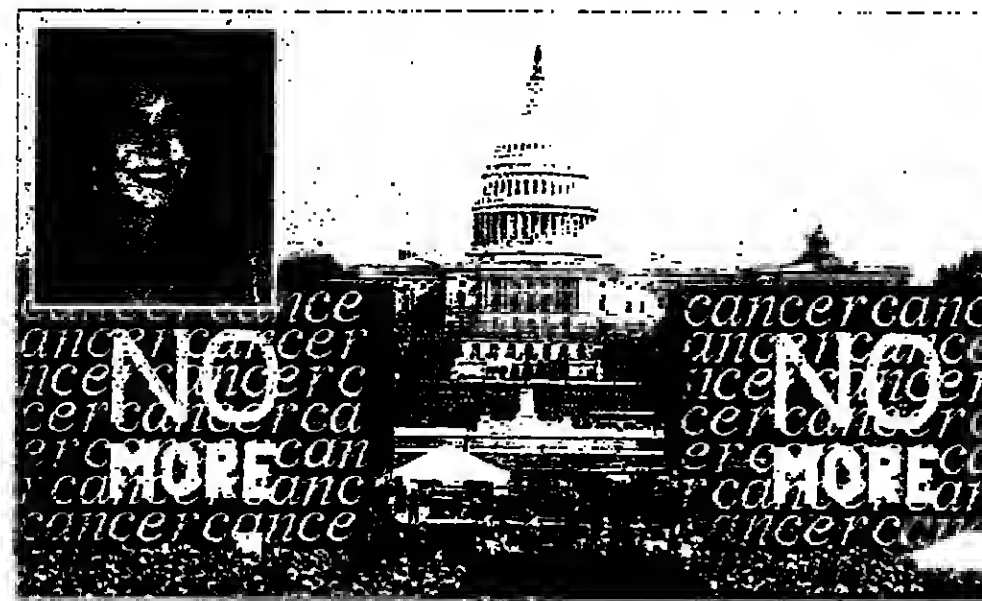
## Queen Noor addresses US cancer rally

WASHINGTON (Petra)—Tens of thousands of cancer survivors, their families and friends, gathered in Washington DC this week in a national rally, "The March," to fight against cancer. Her Majesty Queen Noor, Vice President Al Gore and numerous political activists and other personalities spoke out at "The March."

Vice-President Gore said that each person at the rally represented "a renewed commitment to end cancer, and that the United States declared war on cancer more than quarter of a century ago." He vowed that this generation would be the generation that wins this war.

In her remarks, Queen Noor said that she had heard of this rally from her daughter, Princess Iman, "who had decided to participate and use her faith, love and optimism to benefit many others suffering from this cruel enemy." She noted that in this year alone, while 10 million people worldwide will be stricken with cancer, 15 percent of these cases are preventable.

The Queen added that she would like to join His Majesty King Hussein in expressing their thanks and gratitude for all the love and prayers, not



only from our Jordanian family, but from people throughout the world, and here in the United States where he is undergoing treatment.

"These prayers, and that spirit of family, mean so much to all of us and they make all the difference," she said. Queen Noor added that the impact of this rally would make a difference to the health prospects of people all around the world, by placing

cancer care as a top priority on social and national agendas.

Jordan's satellite links with the United States, for example, provides live telemedical educational conferences, medical consultations and exchange of information, which is vital for the advancement of health care and raising medical standards in both countries.

Queen Noor said that the force behind this national rally is the "power of the people," citing the example of Al Amal Center in Amman as a comprehensive cancer care institute that was created with the power of the people.

Earlier, King Hussein and Queen Noor met with the organizers of the March, and King Hussein expressed his support and admiration for their efforts.

## Nature and Wildlife preservation at the forefront

By Ghassan Joha  
Star Staff Writer

UNDER THE banner of "Wildlife—A Wealth For All," a joint cooperation agreement was formed between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), on 26 September.

The initiative was launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Mijhem Al Khreisha, and the RSCN, president, Anees Muasher, and aims to organize the fieldwork between the two institutions. The Ministry of Agriculture has a total 472 ambulants working in the field of conservation and wildlife preservation, all over the country. "The joint cooperation agreement between the Ministry and RSCN is a step forward to implementing the CITES agreement, which will increase wildlife and protect the local habitats," adds the Minister.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), was the result of a worldwide initiative which came into force in 1973, after a total of 143 countries agreed to take action to protect nature and wildlife. Jordan signed the convention in 1979, "to make a commitment to its wildlife, and to motivate both the public and private sectors to conserve the wildlife and its habitats," declared Mr Al Khreisha.

Mr Muasher, praised the meeting, and called it a "good opportunity to review all the conservation efforts." He added, "The main objective of the meeting was to find the best way to increase the coordination between both the public and private sectors in order to protect the nature and its inhabitants."

Mr Muasher called for the full implementation of all the articles contained in the Cultivation Law, relating to the conservation of environment. He stated that over 50 thousand tourists and wildlife lovers visit Israel every year, to observe wildlife. "There is no reason why this cannot be the case for Jordan as well," he declared, "and focusing our efforts on eco-tourism will benefit the land and its inhabitants at the same time."

The RSCN, founded in 1966 under the patronage of Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, aims to protect and conserve the natural resources



Al Khreisha (L), the Minister of Agriculture, with Anees Muasher, the President of the RSCN

and wildlife diversity throughout the Kingdom. The society supervises six wildlife reserves, and cooperates with the Birdlife International to preserve some additional areas dedicated to birds.

Mr Al Khreisha said that, "It is time to begin to implement laws that will reverse the current abuse of nature and resources." He said that both the Ministry of Agriculture and RSCN share the same duties and concerns towards nature.

During the final part of the meeting, officials from the Ministry and RSCN established a new mechanism to enable officials from the Forestry Dept., to have greater access to their lands, and give them wider powers to fine those violating the hunting laws. They also agreed upon the best way to implement the CITES agreement, increase public awareness on wildlife, as well as organizing media campaigns to highlight the environmental issues.

Mahmoud Yassin, director of conservation at the RSCN, said during the meeting that, "Finding a way to best serve and protect the Kingdom's wildlife habitats, and thus conserve the living diversity of nature, is so important to human life and the environment."

The meeting ended up with an agreement to hold another two meetings in the near future, that will incorporate both the northern and southern agricultural departments.

## Amman to host cultural week

AMMAN (Star)—Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism and the Municipality of Greater Amman, the Friends of Archaeology (FOA) invite you to participate in the celebrations of the first National Cultural Heritage Week, between 9-15 October.

With the expectation that the event will become an annual festival, the focus of this year's activities carries the title of "Protecting Archaeological Heritage."

The opening ceremony will take place at the Amman Citadel, Al Qal'a, starting at 8 o'clock in the morning. The site was chosen as symbolic of the continuity of human settlement throughout the history of Jordan. The backdrop to the

opening show is the domed entrance hall of the impressive Umayyad Palace.

There will be a walk through the historic sites of downtown Amman from the Citadel to the Municipal Hall of Amman in Ras Al Ain.

An exhibition area at the Amman Municipal Hall will be opened at 10.30 am, which includes works conducted by the various archaeological institutes. A book show and children's artwork display will also be on show. The exhibition runs daily until 14 October.

The closing ceremony takes place at the Odeon, near the Roman Theatre, at 7 pm. It is promised to be an excellent cultural evening, with a dramatic recital of the Arabic play "Al Da'ira", written by Hayat

Huwalt Atieh. Tickets for the play are available at the FOA center at the Fourth Circle.

Sponsorship and donations have been made for this one-of-a-kind event by the Canada Fund, Canadian International Development Agency, Consolidated Contracting Company, Arab Potash Company, Industrial

Bank for Development, Bank of Jordan, Coca Cola, Zara Investment-Ayla Residence, Transmed Jordan, and the Municipality of Greater Amman.

For more information please call the FOA center, Tel/Fax: 5930682, or send an E-mail to foa@nets.com.jo.

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## Press Cocktail Press

Edited by Ibrahim Odeh

## Dimona, the curse!

This week Jordanian columnists talked about the Dimona nuclear reactor in Israel. Here, we have two views. In his column in *Ad Dastour* Mohammad Sharif Al Jayousi raised a very important topic for Jordan and the rest of the Arab World. He started off with the story about the harassment of Al Sane', the Arab deputy in the Israeli Knesset for Beir Al Sane'. The investigation with Al Sane' started after he led a demonstration at the gates of Dimona nuclear plant last June, after Israeli newspapers published reports about a potential radiation leak in the reactor.

The columnist referred to Israeli newspaper reports about the dumping nuclear waste in al Naqah. Other reports talked about the dangers of the old buildings of the reactor which are old and unreliable. The writer is concerned about the refusal of the Israeli authorities to allow international investigators to inspect the reactor. The Israelis even refused to sign any agreements to this effect. This leaves us with very little official information about the dangers, duties and budget of the reactor. Because of these, Al Sane' called on the Arab and Islamic worlds to work more closely on a collective strategy to face this potential danger. The writer urges the Arab and Islamic worlds to pressure Israel to put a stop to nuclear testing in the region, and allow international inspection teams entry to their nuclear facilities.

Mohammed Kharoub in *Al Rai* on the other hand concentrated on a different angle. He criticized what he called the double standards of the International Atomic Agency. The Agency refused to look into the Israeli nuclear file, and decided to dismiss the unanimous Arab request for the inspection of Israeli nuclear facilities. While, he says, the same Agency insisted that Iraq produces certificates to prove it does not possess any weapons of mass destruction. The same is true of North Korea. The Agency demands that these countries allow its inspectors to investigate and monitor military installations.

However, the Agency shows no interest whatsoever in the Israeli nuclear programme. Israel which is armed to its teeth with weapons of mass destruction, has more than 200 nuclear warheads, still refuses to join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and whose nuclear plant in Dimona poses a threat which could be as fatal as Chernobyl, apparently does not cause the Agency any worries!

Israel, Kharoub says, has power and status in the UN, and this clout is reflected in the vote of the various UN agencies.

On the other hand, the political clout of the Arabs is virtually nonexistent in these agencies. It is true the Arabs have achieved some success in the General Assembly, but unfortunately these carry no weight. The PLO, for instance, was only recently given an "observer status" in the International Atomic Agency. This means it can attend its meetings but has no voting rights.

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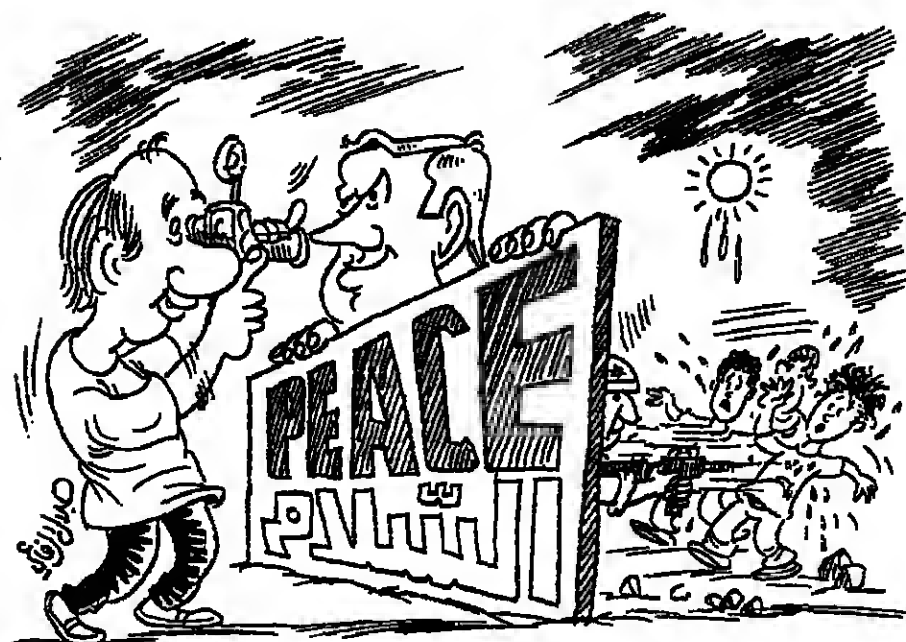
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Reflecting the Change





## Our Say...

### A Peace charade

THE AMERICANS meddled as usual in the Middle East peace process. The Israelis successfully obstructed once again any possibility of a breakthrough in the deadlocked talks. Palestinian President Yasser Arafat remained a mute witness as the other two literally played ducks and drakes with the issue of Palestinian statehood.

Arafat's meetings with US President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington on Monday and Tuesday only served to restrain him from telling the members of the UN General Assembly his intention of declaring the Palestinian state on May 4, 1999.

The snail-paced talks underway in Washington seem more a charade than sincere attempts to make some progress. Clinton's talks with Arafat and Netanyahu is only a means for distracting the world's attention from the sizzling sex scandal of Monica Lewinsky dogging the president. The Americans have no new proposals to offer. On its part, Israel has not yet fully consented to the watered-down US suggestion of troop withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank. There is no change in the situation despite the hectic parleys in New York and Washington. The trip has further exposed the limited manoeuvrability of Arafat, and it is sure to undermine his credibility among the Palestinians.

Both the US and Israel, each in its own way, have marginalised the Oslo Accords so thoroughly that Arafat finds himself in a ridiculous position whenever he demands that Israel should abide by the accords.

When he announced at the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo a few weeks ago that he might declare Palestinian independence on May 4, 1999, he had the Oslo framework in mind. But that framework is not in place any more.

Instead of face-saving statements, diplomatic obfuscations and dilatory tactics, there is a need to clarify the situation in plain, and even blunt, language. The reality is that Israel refuses to honour the Oslo Accords. The Americans are not interested in its implementation. The Palestinians, who believe in it, do not have the political and diplomatic clout to ensure that it is enforced. The idea of declaring the Palestinian state on May 4 was a desperate attempt to keep its provisions alive.

If the Oslo Accords are dead — and everyone involved is aware of it though no one wants to say it — then there is an urgent need to come up with an alternative agenda. There is a policy vacuum in the Middle East. The Palestinian leader must now demand that a new time-bound agenda be drawn up immediately, and they should use the opportunity to close some of the loopholes in the Oslo agreements. The charade has to end, and Arafat must take the initiative to put a stop to it.

# Politics, voting and the new government

By a Star Staff Writer

THE NEW Government of Dr Faysal Al Tarawneh has at last gained the full confidence of the Lower House of Parliament. After extensive talks with deputies, the Government was able to secure 64 show of hands in the final vote of confidence session last week. This is the highest number of votes since 1989 when the cabinet of Prime Minister Mudar Badran received 64 votes.

However, last week's vote had a few surprises. The results of the latest vote was known in advance as three Parliamentary blocs and some independents — 53 deputies in all — made it clear that they would support the Government.

However, there appears to be a void when one looks deeply at the composition of Lower House. The absence of an "organized opposition" has created a lack of diversity in the political makeup of the Kingdom. Observers say that the boycott of the 1997 elections by the Islamic Brotherhood created a "feeble opposition".

Three well-known opposition deputies surprised many when they voted for the government. Two of these were Islamists. Dr Abdullah Akaleb and Mohammad Azaydeh are known for changing their opinions. They ignored the Islamist boycott during the 1997 parliamentary elections — leading to their subsequent expulsion from the party — and now they voted for the Government.

The other surprise was when Mansour Seif Al Din Murad — a man of leftist persuasion — dropped everything and voted for the Government. He joined Bathist deputy Akef Afaleh and one of

## Eye on Jordan



the opposition leaders Mohammad Oran, secretary general of the Arab Land Party.

Meanwhile, those who wanted to maintain close relations with the National Constitutional Party voted for the Government. As one can expect, the NCP's general secretary Abd Al Hadi Majall also gave his blessing.

Yet, there was more than meets the eye. The unified speech which the 53 deputies formulated called on the new cabinet to cut Jordanian ties with Israel and to stop all the appearances of normalization with Israel. They urged the Government — although indirectly — to adopt a similar stand to that carried out by the African countries concerning the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

In addition, 38 speeches delivered

within the three sessions tackled the internal affairs, especially the water crisis.

Former Minister of Water Samir Qawar addressed Parliament in this regard. Political observers later said that his speech was very important, as most of the information contained in his speech proved that former officials were well-informed about the contaminated water problem.

Still on the water issue, Salameh Al Hiary, who pursue the file of the contaminated water under the dome, abstained with his colleague Ahmad Innab. They represent the centrist trend in Parliament. Their abstention shows that there is still disquiet in the dome.

From another angle, there were some surprises in those who voted against the Government. The biggest surprise came from former chief of the General Intelligence Department, Mahmoud Kharabsheh. He was backed by his constituents for casting his

no vote.

Dr Ahmad Odeid Abbadi, a Jordanian ultra-nationalist, who also gave a no-vote, accused some ministers of corruption and spoke against those who monopolized their government position. In his speech, after he received the confidence of the House, Tarawneh avoided talk on certain issues. Regarding normalizing relations with Israel and freezing the Wadi Araba agreement, he said that "peace is a strategic and national need".

Tarawneh also evaded discussions on breaking the UN sanctions on Iraq which have badly affected the Kingdom's economy, by reestablishing the previously prosperous Jordanian-Iraqi commercial ties that were cut at the commencement of the Gulf War.

## A view from America

# Was it a falling Starr?

By Carrie Nelle Moye

A fair proportion of US (and world) television viewers tuned themselves for a major Clinton explosion/implosion the morning of September 21, as his video taped testimony before the grand jury was about to be aired.

Little did we know that what was to follow would be a major revelation of another order. There had been so many warnings as to what to expect. Parents were admonished not to allow their children to view the testimony.

Dan Rather of CBS even spoke directly to young viewers telling them that they usually would be seeing "Tallie Tubbles," but that today there was going to be something else.

Some of us refused to watch, for we were so absolutely tired and disgusted by the length and depth the Starr inquiry. Others felt that they could not miss this historical event, no matter how distasteful either the probe or the revelations might be. Regardless, millions of us watched, and were pleasantly surprised.

No, it was not pleasant to see our President being grilled about such personal matters. Whether we are for or against Clinton, most of us respect the office of the President and do not want that office to be tarnished publicly. The old adage of not airing one's dirty laundry in public, springs to mind.

Yet, President Clinton, known for his inability to curb his temper, could have given the Biblical Job lessons, as his patience was more than just admirable.

As the prosecuting attorney pounded and grilled him from every conceivable angle, to get Clinton to admit to perjury, the President maintained his dignity. Yes, he was evasive, but as famed defense attorney Roy Black said in a subsequent interview, "legally he was forced to be." Black explained to the lay public that any defense attorney would have advised his client — in this case Clinton — to answer precisely as he did, for indeed, it was obvious in any viewer that they were attempting to trap the President.

I think that very many of us dreaded viewing the tapes, not just because of the embarrassment it would cause to the nation — that our leaders would spend so much money and time on a personal matter — but because we had seen the President truly mis-handle his initial statement of "apology" on August 17 — the evening of the very day he had taped his deposition.

We had concluded, naturally, that his deposition was going to show him in the same light. The exact opposite happened. Clinton handled himself masterfully when discussing the delicate matter. He had the most private parts of his per-

sonal life revealed. He was very unhappy, but he still behaved like a statesman.

As this is being written, there are reports of rumors floating around Washington that some sort of deal is in the offering.

Our politicians are inclined that way; they respond to the mood of the public. The public most definitely felt that the Starr investigation went on long enough — from an initial inquiry into a real estate deal in Arkansas to a personal vendetta regarding the President's most intimate, if indiscreet, personal life. The public was disgusted.

For a time, it seemed as though Clinton would be forced to resign, so the business of the nation could be continued and the personal life of Clinton would be pushed to the recesses of our minds. However, after viewing the video tapes, it now appears that there is a backlash of support for the President. Virtually everyone, for or against Clinton, felt that the subject had been pushed to the extreme. We all wish Clinton had a clean moral slate, but who does these days?

It is the old proverb of people living in glass houses not throwing stones. Most of us like to feel our lives are above reproach, but surely each of us harbors some memory of having done something we would prefer not have disclosed to the public. Although the depth of

such behavior varies from person to person, we all feel that we are entitled to privacy. Certainly, a politician is subject to much closer scrutiny, but when do we reach the point of invasion that goes beyond concern for the public good and slides into the mire of a soap opera?

Anyone who still thinks Kenneth Starr was apolitical in his investigation, should note that in the report released last week, he failed to show the statement by Monica Lewinsky where she overtly said that no one — neither the President nor any of his friends — ever asked her to lie or ever promised her a job. This is extremely significant, both in its denotation and in the context of the entire investigation on the part of Starr.

Yes, every one of us is sorry Clinton involved himself in an affair which the American public does not accept. Our culture is clear on this. We know these things are common, but we are not ready for them.

We are embarrassed for Clinton's family, especially his daughter. We are embarrassed that the world community is laughing at us: some because of the event itself and others because of our reaction to it.

Nevertheless, most of us feel Clinton has been a good President. We do not wish to see this matter take up more time. We wish that the President is allowed to get on with the business of running the country.

## Middle East Beat

by Khairi Janbek

### Troubled region

HARDLY A day passes without our region being embroiled in one potential calamity or another. Each time the remedy is at hand, but for reasons of pride and prejudice, the players of the region cannot see it. Whatever happened to trust, respect, and cooperation among equals.

Here in Jordan, the Hashemite leadership has greatly influenced the prospect of unity among the nations of the Middle East. However, this has not stopped the many alliances and counter alliances that continue to bring chaos to the region.

The most recent escalation between Iran and Israel is a prime example, as it drew Syria into the fray as well, with threats of ballistic missiles and immeasurable destruction. In addition to the aforementioned escalation, Iran is upping the ante against the Taliban, and vice versa. Iran, while attempting to reach a reconciliation with the USA and the West, is in danger of a head-on collision with Pakistan, and no one is sure how long Pakistan will remain neutral in the event of hostilities breaking out.

Closer to home, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations seems to be going round in an endless circle, and the eminent declaration of a Palestinian state seems to be the only key to unlock the stalemate. Whether the proposed declaration is a threat or a promise, remains to be seen. Yasser Arafat continues to hold this particular card close to his chest, in a bid to push Netanyahu back onto the path of the Oslo Agreements. But will this chain of action-reaction lead to the formation of a Palestinian state, or to a resumption of armed conflict again?

Meanwhile, the US is attracting criticism over their attempts at Kurdish reconciliation between Taliban and Barzani. The move has aroused the suspicions of both Iraq and Turkey. The latter is already embroiled in a conflict with the separatist PKK, and the move by the US has forced Turkey to raise its level of diplomatic relations with Iraq, with an Ambassador to Baghdad.

The rational goes, that if Iraq can be pressured on the Kurdish issue, then why not Turkey? Ironically, Turkey (a close ally of the US) is being pushed into conducting relations with Iraq. To complicate matters worse, Syria is building a coalition umbrella with one Kurdish faction, which may complement the American efforts in Iraqi Kurdistan.

It seems obvious that the age of proxies among brothers or neighbors may be coming to an abrupt end, and the real muscle-men behind the scenes may actually become the combatants. This should serve as a clear signal to all: if regional disputes are not sorted out by consultations and negotiations at the outset, the slippery slope of war and destruction is the only outcome.

The US must realize that if it wants to play a major role in conflict resolution, then it must act according to the ethos of partnership. It cannot set its own agenda without consulting with those most concerned. By partnership, we mean creating goodwill among all nations. It is not only partnership with the USA that is important, but partnership among all of us in the region. Let all the countries of the region knock their heads together, and make this the main priority.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat shakes hands with Secretary General Kofi Annan after speaking before the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York 28 September. In his speech, Arafat urged the assembly to support the establishment of a Palestinian state as a five year transitional period ends next 4 May.

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## Lurie's NewsCartoon









# Hollow victory for the PLO

Andrew Gowers reviews Said Aburish's recent biography on Yasser Arafat

WHO IS the real Yasser Arafat, and how will history judge him? More than a few authors have attempted to answer one or both of these questions in recent years, with varying degrees of success. The customary answer is that he has been one of the stranger and more enduring phenomena in international affairs during the last third of the 20th century: a terrorist chief turned peacemaker, a man of immense resilience coupled with Protean political dexterity and a rare talent for publicity.

It is he, more than anyone else, who has ensured that the Palestinians have survived as a force to be reckoned with in the toruous politics of the Arab Middle East. This is a formidable feat, given the ferocious odds stacked against his people since the foundation of the state of Israel 50 years ago.

Yet, as Palestinian writer Said Aburish points out in this thoughtfully written biography, there is a hollow aspect to Arafat's achievement which circumstances in the Palestinian entity that he now leads lay all too bare.

With the Middle East peace process at a dead end, his quest for an independent state in which to express the national aspirations he has embodied for more than 30 years looks increasingly forlorn. Instead, he presides over a nepotistic regime, complete with oppressive security forces, whose main purpose seems to be to keep them bottled up and quiescent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. How has it come to this?

Aburish has two advantages over previous Arafat biographers, myself included. He has the benefit of their research, and good timing. His account of the Palestinian leader's career up to relatively recent times, plundered shamelessly from exiguous literature and is augmented by disappointingly little original work. On such real people as he did interview for the book, too many are other journalistic observers. He also overstates his claims to having a unique Arab viewpoint on his subject, including the "native hazaar mentality [sic] which made him."

Fortunately, these deficiencies are offset by the book's perspective. For Arafat's health is failing. The Palestinian National Authority looks ominously like the final point of his career. It is possible now to make a measured judgment of his life.



There can be no disguising the inadequacies of what he has obtained. With Israel adamant in its refusal to make more than

minimal concessions, the Palestinian entity is a sorry shadow of a state; the authority itself a cross between an incompetent parish council and a onepot Arab dictatorship.

Indeed, it bears a resemblance to the "Bantustans" or Indian reservations that Arafat has spent most of his life, and countless press interviews, denying that he would ever

accept as a home for his people. Contrary to the euphoria which surrounded the signing of the Oslo accords a few years ago, and subsequent Israeli-Palestinian co-operation, it certainly does not look at present like the nucleus of a stable Mid-East settlement.

Aburish's charge seems to be that Arafat could have done quite a bit better. The Palestin-

ian leader negotiated through secret Norwegian channels with the Israelis, and in the process fatally undermined official negotiations underway in Washington with delegates from the West Bank and Gaza. He was, argues Aburish, motivated in part by an egotistical fear of being eclipsed by other Palestinian leaders, and he was dealing from a position of weakness that was entirely self-inflicted.

Thanks to Arafat's blundering support for Saddam Hussein over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Palestine Liberation Organization he had built up with Arab financial assistance and led for nearly three decades was bankrupt. Once he had opened his secret channel, says Aburish, the Israelis knew he was on the ropes and pressed their advantage.

There may be an element of sour fantasy in all this. Aburish certainly loses no opportunity to disparage the Israeli-Palestinian agreements, and Israeli motives in particular. It is far from clear that circumstances would have been different if Arafat had allowed negotiations to take their official course rather than opening the Oslo channel.

But it is plausible to argue that Arafat is at least in part responsible for his current plight. His strength, as Aburish says, is also his shortcoming: "the belief that he alone is capable of realizing Palestinian ambitions." His determination was manifest early on in the launch of a chaotic "armed struggle" against Israel, and in his far-sighted decision to seek an accommodation with the enemy. But the PLO under his command became a corrupt, sprawling and indolent bureaucracy with the sole purpose of self-perpetuation. The insecure Arafat, ever anxious to preserve his pre-eminence, surrounded himself with ill-educated, sycophantic advisers. He failed to create lasting institutions, or pursue a coherent, properly planned course. In the end, he bears a sneaking resemblance to the tired and autocratic band of other Arab leaders—men he had always encouraged his people to despise. It is a sad verdict on a man who once promised them so much.

Financial Times Syndication

## Scientific weather forecasting in the Middle Ages



*Scientific Weather Forecasting in the Middle Ages: The Writings of Al Kindi, Studies, Editions and Translations by Gerrit Bos and Charles Burnett, London, Routledge, Kegan and Paul, September 1998, pp560, \$127.50.*

MAN HAS always been concerned with the weather, and the effective ways of predicting it. Simple predictions from meteorological phenomena or from the constellations rising in the sky can be attributed to Aristotle, and in Varro, Pliny and the paraepigrams of the Ancient World.

However, the particular cultural situation of Baghdad in the mid-ninth century encouraged the production of what are perhaps the first comprehensive treatises on weather-forecasting that can be regarded as being based on scientific principles. These are two 'letters' of the 'Philosopher to the Arabs' Yacoub ibn Ishaq Al Kindi (ca. 800-ca.870), who did so much to promote Greek science in the Arabic language.

Al Kindi combines at least three from the constellation in which the learned astrological tradition represented by Al Kindi's predecessors Umar ibn Al Farrukhan and Masha'allah, and those deriving from Ptolemy and Greek sources including the Greek tradition of Pseudo-Aristotle and Ptolemy.

Al Kindi sets these diverse traditions within the context of Aristotelian physics, developing the theory of the fifth essence from the De celo and citing the Meteorology. Each of these two treatises begins with a detailed theoretical discourse; the first concerning cosmology, the second the order of

the sciences and roles of reason and experience.

This volume sketches the history of weather-forecasting from ancient times through to the Early Modern period, and places the two letters of Al Kindi within their historical context. It discusses the doctrine and the sources of the letters and compares their contents with that of other texts by Al Kindi concerning cosmology and the weather. Since the original Arabic text of Al Kindi's letters has not been discovered, the work is drawn from two quite literal Hebrew translations; one of which was made by the renowned mid-13th century translator Kalonymus b. Kalonymus and also from an independent Latin version, apparently made directly from the Arabic, in which the two letters have been combined into one treatise. The two Hebrew translations and the Latin version are edited, taking into account all the known manuscripts, and an annotated English translation of the Kalonymus text is included.

None of the major astrological texts on Arabic, Hebrew or Latin, which about this time was not only an important addition to scholarship on Al Kindi but also the first study devoted exclusively to medieval weather-forecasting—a topic which, from the evidence of the number of texts and manuscripts, had a significant place in medieval scientific and social culture.

BOS is Professor of Jewish Studies at the Martin Buber Institute, Cologne, Germany. Charles Burnett is lecturer in the history of the Arabic/Islamic influence in Europe during the Middle Ages at the Warburg Institute, University of London.

Andrew Zawacki talks to American author Charles Johnson, whose new novel attempts to clarify the message of the black civil rights leader

NOVELIST CHARLES Johnson is best known as the only African American since Ralph Ellison to win the National Book Award. Thirty-eight years after the publication of Ellison's *Invisible Man* in 1952, Johnson's *Middle Passage* (1990) earned its author high praise from critics considering him an heir to Melville, Conrad and Swift as well as to Wright and Cleaver.

The civil rights activist Dr Martin Luther King Jr is the focus of *Dreamer*, Johnson's new novel, which is published next week in the UK. Set in Chicago during the last two years of King's life, *Dreamer* is a fictional account of King's encounter with his almost identical "double," Chaym Smith.

Johnson's preparation for the novel was intense: he spent two years after *Middle Passage* researching King's sermons and collected papers and he studied documentary footage of the civil rights movement in Chicago from 1966 through to King's assassination on April 4, 1968. "I needed to understand this man better, I felt, than I did," said Johnson in a recent interview. "So I read every scrap he managed to write from childhood onwards."

He emphasizes that it is not just about King. "It's also about doubles and the people who made possible the civil rights movement—black people prior to 1970 and going back to the period of reconstruction." But Johnson has not ignored Yeats's admonition. "In dreams begin responsibility." "I felt my primary responsibility," Johnson explains, "was to deliver, particularly for those born after 1970, a portrait of this man that was not the airbrushed, canonized figure that we have come to celebrate every January 15."

Particularly distressing to Johnson are the ways King's philosophy has been distorted. "After King's death, many people in America moved farther and farther away from his dream." In Washington state (where Johnson holds the Pollock chair in creative writing at the University of Washington), "we have a pro-gun group quoting King, who they say would see possession of firearms as a civil right. On the other end of the continuum we have Louis Farrakhan, who also feels free to quote King. My question is: what did this man actually say about various issues? A lot of that has been lost, as well as the scars and bruises of this remarkable man, who I think is one of the most important moral philosophers of the 20th century. I wanted to put those pores and

# The philosopher King



Martin Luther King, making one of his speeches on equality

scars and that sweat back on his brow, particularly during the last two, very difficult years of his life."

Johnson finds it "compelling and interesting how few people across America knew this man. People know him as a civil rights leader, but they don't know him as a moral philosopher, as a man of

the spirit." Apart from Johnson's mission to remind the world of King and his legacy, there was another factor which prompted the theme of the novel. "We began to hear in the 1980s and early '90s the tragic statistics about the situation of young black men in America," he says, noting that in

California, one in three black men between 16 and 34 are "controlled by that critical age group" in '80s. Johnson began wondering, "Didn't King address these matters?"

King, he concluded, is more relevant than ever. "He said we have to fight on two fronts. One is the external battle

against discrimination, injustice and segregation. The other is internal, it's looking inward, in terms of a constant, life-long effort for self-improvement and personal evolution, growth towards particular spiritual ideals. For King, you could not have success with one without having success with both."

Johnson considers himself a philosophical novelist rather than a writer of historical fiction. Asked if the relation between the metaphysical aspects of *Dreamer* and his specific political milieu had been a balancing act, he answers: "King is a philosopher, so he gives me access to a broad canvas, to important moral and ontological ideas that relate to politics. I think that it's all one whole. It is a balancing act, but politics is very much a part of our lives, and I find the political realm interesting when we respond to its complexity."

Johnson finds several of King's tenets "philosophically interesting." Firstly, "the idea that non-violence is not just a strategy on civil rights demonstrations, but intended originally to be a way of life. Secondly, why he spoke so often of agape, or unconditional love, and why that was so important in terms of mediating racial situations in America and preventing black-white conflicts from becoming a power struggle. Thirdly, his belief, right down to the very end of his life, in integration. The way he articulates that at times demonstrates how our lives, our language, the clothes we wear, the furniture of our world are already inherently integrated."

But American racial politics of the 1960s were, of course, bitterly defined by bifurcations. "The civil rights movement ultimately," argues Johnson, "is about self and other. It's about black selves and white others, white selves and black others, and how we construct our identity." So it's no surprise that fictional doubles recur in Johnson's work. "Doubles occur a lot, because the twin is our mirror, because our identity is social, it's based on a 'we' relationship, so the other person understands something about me I can't."

The novel's conclusion alludes to Andrew Young's accusation that when King was shot, Jesse Jackson covered his palms with blood and then appeared bloodstained before the press. "I was haunted by the feeling," says the young narrator Matthew Bishop, "that this act of theatre and filstly, this photo-op, would define the spirit of black struggle for decades after the minister's demise." Asked whether this fear has been realised, Johnson looks to his exemplar: "I don't think in 30 years we've had a leader like Dr Martin Luther King, who was a leader for all Americans, black and white."

His last campaign was for poor Americans, blacks, Appalachians, Hispanics, Native Americans, everybody. I don't think we've had a leader who's spoken that way across racial divides, who has spoken so eloquently about the beloved community. I think that he was very special and that we've felt his absence as a kind of ache for 30 years now."





Anniversary of

## German Unification

Hannover - Germany

## World's leading trade fair city

HANNOVER HAS an unbroken international tradition dating back to the time of the Welfs, one of Europe's oldest royal dynasties. The Hanoverians—and visitors to the city—enjoy an urban lifestyle with wide-ranging cultural attractions. The city is known throughout the world for its trade fairs as well as the opening World Exposition EXPO 2000. It is also the home of numerous well-known companies and scientific research organizations.

### Hannover as a trade fair center

The unique success story of Deutsche Messe AG began with the Hannover Export Fair in 1874. Since then, the fair has grown into Europe's major road and rail routes, the Hannover trade fair centre offers presentation facilities that are second to none in terms of size and functionality. Over the years Hannover has developed into a central market and meeting place for millions of people in East and West.

### Current visitor and exhibitor statistics

Almost 2.6 million visitors (350,000 from abroad) attended the 50 international trade fairs and exhibitions that took place in Hannover during 1997. 28,000 exhibitors, including 10,000 from abroad, showcased their latest products and services at the Hannover Exhibition Grounds.

Areas of specialization Hannover is the number-one venue for major international capital goods fairs focusing on information and telecommunication technology, software, electrical engineering and electronics, mechanical and plant engineering, automotive technology, metalworking, woodworking and agriculture. No other trade fair centre in the world offers such large-scale facilities.

**Hannover - Fairs International (HFI)** HFI, a member of the Deutsche Messe AG, Hannover Germany Group, organizes international and very successful trade fairs in China, Malaysia, Turkey, Singapore,



Thailand, Vietnam. In addition, HFI organizes joint displays and presentations for industrial bodies and governments all over the world.

### International trade fair services

Deutsche Messe AG has 62 foreign representatives and 7 domestic representatives. It is their job to help and advise exhibitors, visitors, industry associations, government departments, travel operators and journalists on all questions relating to the Hannover trade fair centre. Deutsche Messe AG is also committed to making its extensive know-how available to companies that want to exhibit in other countries and regions. In addition, Messe AG offers its exhibitors extensive service packages. The spectrum ranges from marketing and press relations to Internet services, technical services and logistics.

### EXPO 2000 — perspectives for tomorrow

The World Exposition EXPO 2000 will take place in the immediate vicinity of the Hannover Exhibition Grounds. The motto of the World Exposition—'Humankind, Nature, Technology'—will be the guiding principle for the upgrading

and optimization of the Hannover trade fair centre. The outcome will be an international meeting place which is ideally equipped for the next millennium.



national meeting place which is ideally equipped for the next millennium.

### The Hannover trade fair centre at a glance

Total capacity: 1 million m<sup>2</sup>  
26 halls: 455,000m<sup>2</sup>  
Open air site: 170,000 m<sup>2</sup>  
Exhibitors: 28,000  
Percentage of foreign exhibitors: 36%  
Convention Center: 35 rooms and halls/seating capacity of 5,200  
No. of events per year: 50+

### Hannover Fair and Jordan

Jordanian businessmen have been visiting Hannover's different fairs since the early 1960's. Jordanian industrial firms and computer software programming firms began exhibiting in Hannover from the early 1990's.

German Ambassador in Amman Peter Mende

## 'The far-right does not play any role in Germany's policy'

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** On the eve of the German Unification Day, *The Star* talked to Mr Peter Mende, the German Ambassador to Jordan. Mende is a veteran diplomat who served in the Kingdom in the early '70s. He discussed Jordan-German relations, economic relations, peace process, and German unification. Excerpts follow:

**How do you evaluate Jordan-German relations?**

As I used to state publicly, all the time, they are excellent. There is no problems, never in the past, and I don't expect any in the future. These relations are based on mutual interests, on economic interests, on a large number of Jordanians living in Germany, having their families still here in Jordan, and on Germans liking your country when visiting it.

**Do you see any room for improvement especially in the economic field?**

There is always room for improvement. Our trade with Jordan is going up, but German investment in your country is minimal. This should and could be changed.

**Overall, how do you see**



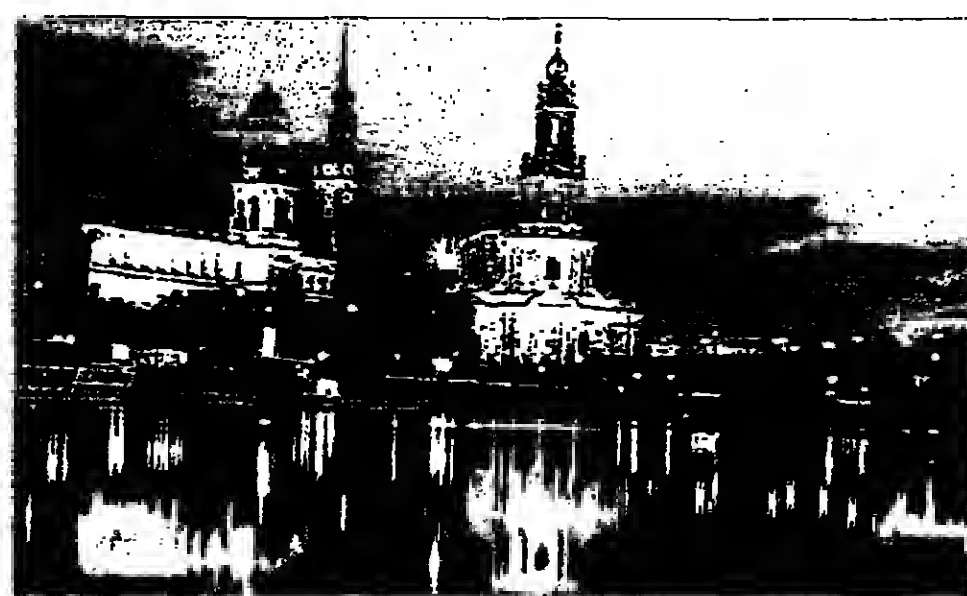
Mende

**Germany's role in the Middle East?**

Germany is not a major player in the Middle East as we all know. Germany, within the European Union, formulates EU policy on the Middle East. Bilaterally, Germany plays no strong role in the Middle East, except in the field of trade, and in the role of what I call human-social relations, like academia, scholarships, archaeological interests.

**What is your opinion of the peace process?**

The peace process started off in good spirits. Everybody was



optimistic that the difficulties in the region could find a solution. Unfortunately, that optimism did not prevail. The peace process is today in a very serious state. I say this without blaming one or the other of the parties; Jordan is suffering because of the lack of progress, the active role of Europe is limited somehow by those who don't want Europe to play a more

active role and by those who are heavily involved in the negotiations process. But Europe, nominally, a special envoy, and it's willing to play a more active role.

**What did the elections mean for Germany?**

It is a normal democratic process. People were highly motivated in the extraordinary

high turnout. The majority of votes opted for a change in leadership. Now we get it. But the general direction of German foreign policy will not change.

**Does the far-right movement signify anything if at all in terms of German politics?**

First of all, it would be a question of definition of what is far-right. Second, Germany does not differ from other European states, with the fringe minority of the population who are dissatisfied with the main stream political parties. The far-right doesn't play any political role in Germany's policy.

**How do you see the concept of German unity since the collapse of the German wall?**

German unity is a fact. It is on the right track, it moved far ahead. Some people are dissatisfied that unity is not moving faster, but there was no other way to dissolve the separation of Europe which Germany was a part of. There is no regret but the discussion on how fast and by which means we could achieve final unity for all of us in Germany goes on.

**What about German economic power and its future vis-a-vis Europe and the US?**

Germany is a highly industrialized state with a very solid social structure and a population of roughly 80 million educated well trained people. This as such means strength and power. German policy has always been and will always be to balance our economic strength with those of our European neighbors, partners and friends. We are competitors with the United States in some fields, but we are also partners in many other fields.

## Schroeder ends Kohl's longtime tenure as German Chancellor

By Carol J. William

BERLIN—Gerhard Schröder, the suave and media-savvy governor of Lower Saxony, ousted German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in a splintered federal election Sunday, sending Europe's longest-serving leader into retirement and ending an era that witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification.

The one clear message from the vote, that gave Schröder's Social Democratic Party a mandate to build a new government was that Germans wanted change after 16 years of Kohl, even if they remain uncertain how best to achieve it.

While Schröder's party and the environmentalist Greens appeared to have enough votes between them to hold a slim majority in the Bundestag, or Federal Assembly, strong showings by the liberal Free Democrats, who have been junior partners in Kohl's coalition, and by the former Communists of eastern Germany meant the opposition will be nearly equal in numbers.

In a dignified concession barely an hour after the polls closed, a weary Kohl, 68, congratulated his younger opponent and announced his resignation from the leadership of the Christian Democratic Union, which he has headed for a quarter of a century.

"This is a personal success for Gerhard Schröder, and I wish him a deft hand for the sake of our country," Kohl, poised and betraying little emotion, told supporters, who sipped dejectedly from champagne glasses that had been filled before results came in to CDU headquarters in Bonn.

With his party's meager 35 percent showing, the worst in its postwar history, Kohl became the first sitting chancellor to be voted out of office since the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in 1949 on the ruins of Nazism.

Schröder arrived at his party's packed nerve center to a press of well-wishers so overwhelming that they spilled onto

the capital's main drag, creating a giant street party and blocking traffic.

The 54-year-old son of a war widow who scrubbed floors to support her five children, Schröder paid his respects to Kohl before vowing to "fight the scourge of unemployment" while maintaining a stable economy and foreign policy.

"He was a tough opponent, but the voters have spoken about whom they want to lead our country into the future," Schröder told the jubilant crowd basking in the heat of thousands of television lights.

He promised to shepherd Germany through the tough challenges of the next four years, which will include European monetary union, a move from Bonn to this prewar capital and the expansion of NATO and the European Union.

While Schröder and his left-of-center Social Democrats won the right to open coalition talks with potential partners by virtue of their collecting 41 percent of the vote, the largest percentage, the shape and spirit of the post-Kohl leadership was far from clear.

The leftist Greens, who won a disappointing 6.5 percent of the vote, have been declaring themselves ready to compromise and cooperate with Schröder. But with only about an eight-seat majority in the 656-member Bundestag after redistribution of votes given to parties that failed to clear the 5 percent minimum, Schröder would have to worry about radical Greens parliamentarians breaking ranks with the more moderate leadership to vote down legislation vital to reforming Germany's bloated social welfare system.

Schröder and Social Democratic leader Oskar Lafontaine



Schröder

wants to become vice-chancellor and foreign minister in return for providing the balance of parliament seats Schröder needs to have a majority.

Wolfgang Schäuble, Kohl's preference to succeed him as CDU leader, also seemed to rule out an alliance with the Social Democrats when he told ARD television that he considered a grand coalition "an emergency measure" to be employed only in the event no other partnerships are possible.

But the leader of the powerful Association of German Industry, Hans-Olaf Henkel, told the network a grand coalition "would be better for the economy and for jobs."

"The chancellor election isn't everything. If Schröder wants to push through new laws, he'll have to negotiate with us if he wants our support," warned PDS parliamentary leader Gregor Gysi. "For example, there will be no automatic yes for the next budget."

left open the option of talking with Kohl's CDU successors about a possible grand coalition—the "elephants" wedding option that would draw the traditional adversaries of Christian and Social Democrats into a governing alliance.

Pre-election polls suggested that most Germans would prefer such a grand coalition to push through difficult belt-tightening, for which neither major party wants to take sole blame. That left-and-right-of-center union might also mute the strengthened voice of the ex-Communists, now called the Party of Democratic Socialism, who might otherwise find enough common ground with the Greens to undermine Schröder's reform objectives.

Western allies have also expressed wariness about a German government including the Greens, who were born of the strident anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and remain committed to shutting down nuclear power plants and demilitarizing NATO.

Greens leader Joschka Fischer, however, struck the pose of a partner in Schröder's victory, praising "our joint efforts" to bring an end to Kohl's right-of-center rule. Fischer has made clear that he

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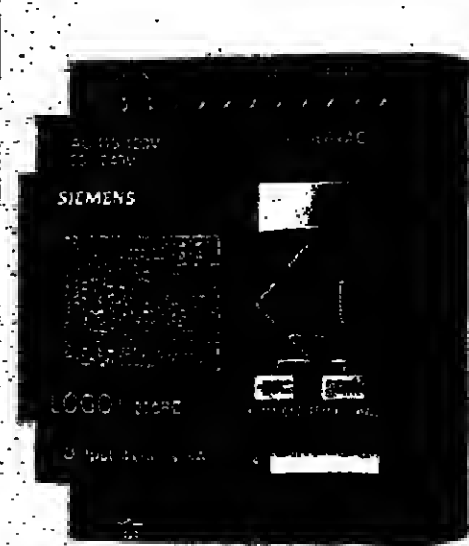
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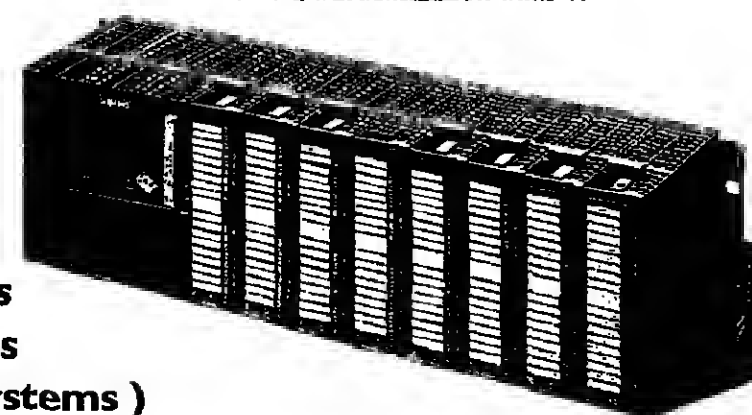
Congratulates the German Government, the Staff of the German Embassy in Amman and the German People. We wish them great progress and success



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# Crusading on a wing and a prayer

Sassounian's homeland—a brutal-yet-beautiful region settled more than 3,000 years ago—desperately needs the help. In the space of a decade, Armenia has endured a devastating earthquake, the fall of the Soviet Union, deadly border conflicts and a punishing economic blockade by hostile neighbors.

By John M. Glionna

YEREVAN, Armenia—He is a most unlikely national hero, this foreign-born crusader dressed in wrinkled dress pants, Hush Puppies and an outmoded Member's Only jacket.

His eyes blinking against the light, Harut Sassounian walks tentatively down the steps of the US military's C-5 Galaxy cargo plane, the largest airborne transport vehicle on Earth. Once again, the 47-year-old Glendale, California, newspaper publisher has packed a mammoth plane with millions of dollars in aid collected from donors across the United States.

For Sassounian, this war-torn former Soviet republic is at once an exotic and heartbreaking place that has become the center of his cultural identity. Eight thousand miles from home, it is the road's end for all his energies, the coveted kingdom to which he returns again and again bearing the fruits of his emotional modern-day crusade.

This summer, for the 100th time in the last 10 years, Sassounian's Glendale-based United Armenian Fund arrived with an array of supplies aimed at jump-starting the economy and self-respect of this infant democracy. The private \$230 million airlift mission, bankrolled in major part by investor Kirk Kerkorian, has become the largest to any country since the United States government's historic Berlin airlift after World War II.

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In the space of a decade, Armenia has endured a devastating earthquake, the fall of the Soviet Union, deadly border conflicts and a punishing economic blockade by hostile neighbors.

On the Tarmac, Sassounian—a shy man still reticent despite numerous such encounters—steps into a pressing phalanx of reporters.

"What have you brought us?" one local journalist asks.

Sassounian, the United Armenian Fund's executive director, recites his \$8-million cargo of precious medical and technical supplies, explaining that a second, smaller plane will arrive the next day.

"All of it," he shouts over the roar of the plane's big engines in a fluent native tongue. "It is for our Armenia."

The tale of the 100th mission in Sassounian's crusade is as much the story of the 10 years and 99 often-mad and near-exhausting flights he organized before. The crusade is the litany of countless telephone calls, arm-twisting, all-night strategizing and near-begging that it takes to fill an airplane with donated supplies and safely guide it into the waiting arms of a needy people.

The crusade is savoring the satisfaction of opening the battered metal doors of yet another monstrous cargo jet, one with a belly large enough to swallow half a soccer field, and to see the fruits of your labors: computers, kerosene lanterns, pallets of syringes, antibiotics and textbooks, mammography machines, even entire hospital operating rooms.

Most of it has been given free of charge, not only by supportive groups but also some very profit-conscious hospitals and universities—all because Sassounian knew where to look and how to close the deal.

"Getting materials at the cheapest price is Harut's last resort," said a friend of Sassounian's. "His first priority is to convince companies to donate all they can and then pay the freight to have it

shipped."

If you're Harut Sassounian, the crusade's paycheck comes when you arrive in the homeland. It's hearing the appreciative oohs and aahs of needy doctors and nurses who until now have watched helplessly as people die of curable disease and injury because there was not enough medicine. Or the exclamation of the school teachers who can't take their eyes from the textbooks, the new computers and building supplies you deliver, the ones who take your hand and cry as they thank you.

Sassounian's homeland is a place that until a few years ago often had no energy to run factories or pump water into homes because so much money was being used to fund the war against neighboring Azerbaijan. It is a place where until recently, you were issued a candle when checking into a hotel because the lights were out.

Each time he comes, Sassounian negotiates a drab-looking landscape of pollution, broken concrete, harsh edges and homely Soviet architecture. He is sometimes driven to distraction by a country where the statue of Lenin in Yerevan's main square was only recently dragged away—a place where the people still sing Russian songs, where the groups of humanitarian Sassounian leads are still tailed by grim government handlers, just like in the old days.

Through rigorous controls and detailed manifests that keep tabs on shipments, Sassounian has fiercely battled the legacy of Russian graft that threatens to suck the life from his crusade.

"I don't kid myself," he says. "I know that some supplies are diverted, maybe as much as 20 percent. I just hope that one day Armenians will discontinue that foolish holdover from the Soviet days

when people were proud to steal what they could from the government."

Before the earthquake, he had visited Armenia only once—as a tourist. His ancestors were driven from the homeland centuries before and Sassounian was born an exile in Syria. Only in the crusade has he found a way to go back home, to allow the lonesome Armenian landscape to cast a haunting shadow over his entire life.

"For us, Armenia is a dream, an ideology, a passion," he says. "Our homeland is the root of us all. Without it, we couldn't cling to our sense of heritage for very long. And so everything we do, it is for Armenia."

A tour bus rumbles slowly through the dusty, pot-holed streets of Gyumry, Armenia's second-largest city. Sassounian and his group of humanitarians, lobbyists and investors are beginning a four-day tour that will include a reception at the presidential palace and a visit to the national assembly.

But first, at Sassounian's insistence, they come to Gyumry, a depressed city of shattered concrete and kerosene-smoked skies that in many places looks as though the quake struck 10 days ago, not 10 years. While the government has built new apartments for an estimated 100,000 people, another 150,000 still live in substandard housing. The rebuilding, they complain, has come far too slowly.

"Ten years and nothing has changed," one woman weeps to the delegation. "They've done nothing. We live like dogs."

Said Sassounian: "That's why many government officials don't even come here anymore. They can't take the heat."

At a lunch, local officials congratulate themselves on their progress. But later, after Sassounian's bus leaves, the mood remains bleak. At a local church, the Rev. Parn Avedikian laments that people are still starving. He questions the nature of aid now concentrating on rebuilding schools and hospitals, not bringing food.

Inside one abandoned aid container, 40-year-old Melis Krakorian lives with his wife and five children. He once worked at the Soviet Union's largest hosiery factory in Gyumry, one that was leveled in the quake. He hasn't worked since, existing on money sent by relatives in America.

He kisses his 10-year-old son on the cheek. "This is all I have," he says. "It is not easy to be an Armenian."

The 6.9 magnitude earthquake of 1988 changed Sassounian's life. He was no longer happy just to write a weekly column in his 2,500-circulation California Courier, often criticizing Soviet policies. He longed to do something. He knew part of the game. After coming to the United States in his teens, he had worked overseas in marketing for a large corporation. He knew, too, that Armenians were often their own worst enemy, a hopelessly fractured people with many factions battling for a political upper-hand.

So after watching the angry breakup of several aid meetings in Los Angeles, Sassounian hatched his own plan: He asked Kerkorian, an Armenian American who'd made his fortune in airlines and hotels, to pay for an emergency cargo flight into Armenia. Kerkorian offered to provide \$100,000 for an airlift if other Armenians could fill the plane. The crusade was born, as Sassounian organized a coalition of seven groups, including Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation.

"All my friends laughed at me," he recalled as mission No. 100 flew over the Atlantic. "They said, 'Armenians haven't been able to agree on anything for thou-



A woman sweeps outside her Yerevan home

sands of years. How are you going to change that?"

He changed it on Dec. 2, 1989, exactly one month after he pitched his idea to Kerkorian, when 25 tons of emergency aid left for Armenia aboard a rented Boeing 707. Immediately came talk of a second flight, then a third.

From his office in Glendale—home to many of Southern California's 300,000 Armenian Americans, the largest such community worldwide—Sassounian developed contacts with domestic aid groups and government officials on both sides of the Atlantic.

"I'm no longer just an observer," he remembers telling himself on one of those first flights. "I was actually doing it, the real thing. Not sitting in a warm house in Glendale and writing a check. You handed out food and saw the thanks in people's eyes."

"They were crying. I was crying." Each trip seemed to hit a wall of Soviet bureaucracy. On the first flight, the Soviet government initially denied permission to land. But Sassounian says he went on packing the plane anyway, convincing a friend in the Soviet ministry who went to school with then-Communist leader Mikhail Gorbachev to intercede. "On the morning the plane was to leave, we got a telegram from Moscow containing just one word: 'Yes.' Nothing more," Sassounian said. "It was that close."

On another early flight, his cargo plane was forced to land in Soviet Georgia by a Russian Air Force jet pilot who Sassounian said threatened to shoot if they did not submit to an inspection.

Problems still persist. Sassounian, who frequently draws audiences with Armenian President Robert Kocharyan and other high-ranking ministry officials, recently prevailed upon Kocharyan to fire a high-ranking customs official he suspected of charging for bogus "lab" tests on shipments of towels and children's vitamins. Another time, a warehouse full of aid from a group other than Sassounian's also disappeared from a Yerevan airport hangar and was returned only after a ransom was paid.

In an interview at the presidential palace, Kocharyan said he was battling the

problem through reforms to the country's corrupt judicial system. "What kind of decisions are made by judges paid only \$25 a month?" he asked.

In Spitak, residents complain that little free medicine ever reaches them. High in the mountains, Spitak remains emotionally scarred by that December day when the earth was torn apart. To handle all the dead, the town's cemetery tripled in size. In the newer sections, the headstones, with their bas-relief portraits of the quake victims who lie beneath, lists only the birth dates. No one can forget the date of death. Hours after Sassounian's tour bus full of humanitarians has left Gyumry, Avedikian Sarkisian, a local TV producer, watches a group of children play in the rubble of one of thousands of crumbled buildings.

"Look around," he says. "These children all go to school in tin shacks and they think it's normal to live in a city that's nothing but ruins. I'm an adult. I understand horrible things such as earthquakes. But they don't."

This is part of Sassounian's crusade, to show Armenians that life is more than poverty and devastation. In Yerevan, before leaving Armenia, he tours a Yerevan children's cardiac center his group has helped supply with modern equipment and medicine. In the last few years since receiving Sassounian's help, the center has successfully operated on more than 1,800 men, women and children.

Sassounian, a father of three, visits a 7-month-old girl with a congenital heart defect whose operation that morning couldn't have happened without supplies from the latest airlift.

He sits on the edge of her bed, disturbed by the sight of tubes running into her mouth, her tiny eyes blinking as he strokes her hand. Later, he holds a 10-month-old boy born sickly and blue-skinned. Now, after a recent heart operation, his face looks rosy and healthy.

Like Armenia itself, the child now has a chance at life. "What a boy," the crusader beams proudly. "What a beautiful boy."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



A young Armenian girl takes an early-morning nap at a food market in Yerevan while her parents eke out a living selling tomatoes.

## The art of Rula Shukairy

# Feelings, letters and paintings

INCISIVE CONSTRUCTION is introduced in feelings, letters, and paintings. Shukairy's paintings are personal letters to herself. I know nothing about Rula Shukairy personally, yet I can read into her art. In doing so, we are creating the world again. If we don't recreate what the artist has created, then that is grave embarrassment for the beholder. How you perceive her art depends very much on personal experience, on how you structure/define what the painter did. As read by us it is a structure in space—it is objective soft innerspace.

Her paintings are non-representational, but still it can be read, and that depends on you, his hers and my personal experience, demands, hates, lusts, wishes and feelings, and on how we structure it. Her art is spiritual—a landscape of the soul. Yet it is busy with representations for whatever reason. That is how she gives meaning to structure and reality. Man-made work is often struck down as meaningless. But in Rula Shukairy's art, we discover, or detect ourselves in talking about it, in reading through the reality of our life, our feelings which are inside her paintings.

These working forms are naturally directed by us as structure and space. This inner space of hers becomes in her painting a real space. A real space which is objective, soft or perhaps even one which is taken away from her whole personality. Still we may never get it! Yet you see what you see. You define it with your fantasy, with your ability to recreate it into structure, sounds of music and rhythm. Her paintings are characterized with the

kind of openness in the surface of her paintings, in the space behind the different surfaces. As such, it makes people speak of their inner patterns, beliefs, demands, hates, lusts, obsessions.... It is those inner patterns that cause images to be read differently.

For we have always been trained everything that influences gives us our own pattern, and it is so that we relate to the outside world. The frame and the glass and the matting (the reality which we are part of) make the work inside more important as it is an abstract from us. For after all, all good art is abstract, because art abstracts from reality, it crystallizes facets and collects them into one line.

What the artist did is give a perfect structure through a surface, which you define, following your ideas about it, about whatever, about art, space, life etc.... Her wonderful structure and her killing of regularity leads to the destruction in her paintings. Through her art, it is easy to say that someone, somewhere is searching for the truth. If the whole truth is not found, then at least we find pieces, reflections or images of it. She has fantasy and ability to create/structure her paintings into rhythm, music and feeling, all structured by patterns related to the outside world. It is precisely this relation that has come between body language and art.

With China Ink and Acrylic, she uses the most raw materials anyone could use and create with such feeling. So, impossibly, Shukairy chose very dangerous means that can turn into beautiful transparent surface colors, although Acrylics are known for great body and structure. The China ink

she uses gives more volume to the structure. Without doubt, her technique is the most advanced. In her art we found three levels; the shore, the blue sea, and the high sky. Seen from the back, it gives the beholder a chance to go in and identify. But at the same time, Shukairy achieves color interference with no divisions. Her colors are never objective because life is never objective. With such strong means, she produces innovation to trap...

Narrowness and darkness are the secret of her art. It is thus evident that the artist relates opposite forces (narrowness and darkness) with opposite forces to each other (space and light) to achieve unity. That is when her inner visions/patterns come out. For inner vision is the subject matter, even if it is not horizontal. And a real artist creates from in side. What use is there in copying!

The main message in her paintings as I see it, is that she gives us a chance to learn that we are dealing with the most important thing in life—light. Very few painters are able to paint light. And Shukairy's paper takes light in itself and radiates it outside. The physical and emotional appearance of light transcends in radiation, into the outside. Yes, the material i.e. canvass, is there, but it is only there as a means for radiating the light, after the light has sunk into it. The light is incorporated on surface, depth, structure, and emotional quality of colors, all of which contribute to meaning. This collection of light on such commonly used material, is most stimulating but is nevertheless the most difficult task, and Shukairy has achieved this.

This is her concentration of the ousted world through her personal screen, for we understand the world through a screen of ourselves, and we understand ourselves through the screen of the world. Shukairy's inner vision are at first, stored for days, months, even years. Then it is painted and given to the world.

A great strength lies within her paintings: objectivity, her paintings, as tempting as they may well be, are not a window into ambition, or even the real world. When we look at her art, we create it again; otherwise good art is worthless. Her art keeps objectiveness of the surface as is, it does not pretend to open a window of reality, because such a window is dangerous in that it spoils the world, because the mystery would get lost. And because it is objective, we can relate to it—for it shows us, the good with the bad. This is only made possible because she chose means, which can turn into nice beautiful surface color, and transparency like a veil of silk.

I find Rula Shukairy's art very stimulating, myself being one who has been living in the art world for so long, and yet her art does not remind me of anything I'd seen before. She has produced innovation, a new art. She has proven to us that art can only be art if it creates a new feeling.

A commentary by Hans Peter, an art critic and a former curator of the Dusseldorf Museum in Germany.





## The Korean Folklore Dance Group A fine symbol of a Far East culture

By Ghassan Joha  
Special to The Star

JORDANIANS WERE introduced to the full throttle of Korean culture at the Prince Hassan Auditorium in the University of Jordan earlier this week. The scintillating delight of the east was given by the Korean Folklore Group.

The troupe, which came to Jordan from Baghdad, performed to a delighted audience that included Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture Mahmoud Fadel Al Tal, who was deputizing for Minister Taha Al Hassan, and the Korean Ambassador Mr. Lee Kyung-woo.

A total of seven dances and musical performances were presented during the night, which began with a speech delivered by the Ambassador to the Jordanian people.

He praised the move made by the Ministry of Culture to spot the awareness of people to one of the most richest cultures of the Far East. "Culture and art are fundamental," stressed the Ambassador, "they can both bring people closer to each other." He said that this step strengthens the relationships between the two cultures, and shows the different styles of the dancing art of Korea, which is gaining a global appreciation among other cultures of the Far East.

The evening began with the vigorous sounds of hourglass drums. The tempo of the beat filled the stage with artistic vibrations. The "Samdo Seoul" Changgu depicts the exciting rhythms of hourglass drums played and carried by the dancers on their shoulders. It enthused zest in the audience. The dance, which came from the Korean Samdo country, blends the Kyung Sangdo, Jeulado, Chochungdo and Kyungkido rhythms, with four young people fiercely beating on the drums.

The next dance was "Wha-Kwan Mu", where the peace of nation is prayed for. Using the "Hansam", or the long sleeves attached to the wrists, the dance is performed as a ritual, which has rigid rules of movement. The long colorful sleeves portray the sense of rhythm and flavor of the Korean people as well as the magnitude of dancing.

The "Glorious Dance", which is performed to exorcise evil spirits or drive out calamities is locally known as "Sanjo" or

their shoulders. The group, however, displayed a variety of dance techniques. The male drum performer of Changgu, wearing an hourglass drum, gives a thundering act.

Continuing the mood, is "Samul Nori", the Percussion Quartet. It is a modern chamber adaptation of the farmers' dance and music, which used to be performed outdoors.

This piece of music is especially played by four percussion instruments, named as Kwanggwari (small gong), Ching (large gong), Changgu (hourglass drum) and Puk (drum).

The dance is a lively and vibrant percussioned ensemble, which clearly displayed the vivid rhythms led by the players' enthusiasm and the harmonious arrangement of the four instruments.

However, the next "Puchaechum"—Fan Dance—is widely regarded as the most unique Korean traditional dance, that originates from the folkloric Shaman fan (a colorful middle-sized device played by hand and shaped like a segment of a circle).

Both the luxurious dresses and fans are used to perform this splendid dance to convey the glory of the universe and its divine rhythm. The last dance was an unusual one. The "Nong Ark" is a kind of modern reconstructed work of the traditional performing arts of Korea, which used to be performed by the farmers in the ancient era of agriculture. In this artistic performance, dancers expressed their thanks to the Heavens for making the harvest abundant.

The merry music, along with the elegant dances, strengthen the reconciliation and unity, peace and safety among the Korean people. Just before closing the curtains, Mr. Al Tal praised the group with flowers and exchanged handshakes on the stage, along with the Korean Ambassador.



"Ipchum." The performer, clad in a white robe and scarf, hypnotized the audience with the slow rhythms of the "Sanjo", by creating more beautiful movements as the tempo of the hourglass drum "Changgu" gradually increased. With hems of skirts tied to their waists, beautiful maidens danced to the exciting rhythms of hourglass drums played and carried on

## The people of Korea

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE indicates that the Korean Peninsula was inhabited by lower palaeolithic people at least as early as 500,000 B.C. Many archaeological sites, mostly located along rivers, have been excavated. The most famous are Sokchang-ri in Ch'ungch'ongnam-do province and Chongok-ri in Kyonggi-do province. Various stone tools, including hand-axes and chopper-scrapers, have been found at the sites, leading archaeologists to believe that their inhabitants engaged in hunting and fishing. These people are thought to have dwelt in caves, as the bones of many extinct animals and relics of their daily life have been unearthed in such places. The supposed connection between these palaeolithic people and today's Koreans is blurred at present by the lack of sufficient archaeological excavations and anthropological evidence.

It is the latecomers of neolithic culture that scholars generally agree are the direct ancestors of today's Koreans. According to anthropological and linguistic studies, as well as legendary sources, Koreans trace their ethnic origins from those who lived in and around the Altai mountains in Central Asia. Several thousand years ago, these people began to migrate eastward until they finally settled in an area including Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula.

When these migrants entered the Korean Peninsula around the third millennium B.C., they were confronted by natives called Paleosians, who were eventually driven into various areas outside the Korean Peninsula. The Ainu of the northern tip of Japan, the natives of Sakhalin and the Eskimos of the eastern coast of Siberia are all descendants of these Paleosian tribes.

uncovered two different types of pottery of this period, which raises the possibility that there were people of two different cultural ages. The two types are comb pattern pottery of a political Age people and plain pottery of a Bronze Age people. The patterned pottery, believed to be the product of a food-gathering, hunting and fishing people, has been discovered near riverbanks and along the seashore, while the plain pottery, believed to have come from a food-producing people, has been unearthed mostly in the hilly regions of the country. Although these two people appear to have possessed different technologies, they shared the same culture, distinct from the Han Chinese.

As noted, most of the natives were subsequently driven north to Sakhalin, Kamchatka, and to the Arctic region by these newcomers, while a few were assimilated. Some of the migrants continued to move and eventually reached the southwestern shores of Japan. Therefore, there are cultural similarities in terms of beliefs, for example: shamanism, myths, and customs, as well as physical similarities among the ancient Koreans, Japanese and Siberian Eskimos.

Agriculture was introduced during the Bronze Age, which began around the 15th century B.C. Increased food produc-



tion and population growth led to social differentiation based on an unequal access to economic resources on the one hand, and clan or kin group formations on the other. Tribal societies of various sizes were established on the basis of clan relations, and some established chiefdoms and mini-states competing with each other. At the same time, people continued to migrate to Japan. Possessing more advanced civilization and culture, these migrants enjoyed ruling class status and even established their own small states.

The southwestern part of Japan, in particular, offered easy access to culture from the Korean Peninsula. This region provides ample archaeological evidence of significant cultural and ethnic relations with Korea. More archaeological study is required to draw an exact map showing how widely Koreans were dispersed during this period. Based on Chinese records and archaeological reports, however, it is assumed that they were living not only on the Korean Peninsula but also in the vast area of Manchuria and even the region north of the Yellow River in today's People's Republic of China.

Cultural contact with the Chinese also was significant. Around the fourth century B.C., iron making was introduced through contacts with the Chinese. Inter-tribal competition as well as inter-ethnic contact with the Chinese became more frequent. The numerous Korean mini-states and tribal groups were integrated into several leading states, and resisted the military expansion of the Chinese. A strong sense of ethnic identity

and cultural distinctiveness enabled them to remain ethnically and culturally different from the Chinese.

As the ancient history of Korea shows, various small states were composed of dialectal groups within the Altaic language family. In the latter half of the seventh century A.D., these early states were unified in the Shilla kingdom, a significant event because this political unity was to consolidate the homogeneity of the Korean people, speaking one language and sharing the same culture.

However, the northern half of the Korean Peninsula and the whole of Manchuria, which had been the territory of another state called Koguryo, came under the reign of a new state called Parhae, established by a refugee group from defeated Koguryo. This state was highly heterogeneous both in ethnicity and in culture. The ruling class was composed exclusively of Koreans, while the general public was made up of various non-Korean local ethnic groups including the Manchurian Tungus. The ruling Koreans failed to incorporate the non-Koreans, and as a result, their state was challenged and gave way to the largest of the native ethnic groups. From that time, Manchuria was inhabited by various groups of Tungusic people.

While there was a considerable mixing of races among the various peoples in Manchuria, the inhabitants of the Korean Peninsula maintained their ethnic identity with only minimal mixing with external groups. Although cultural contacts were extensive between Korea and China from the early stages of their history, ethnic assimilation did not occur. Koreans

were (and still are) highly conscious of ethnic differences and cultural distinctions, which meant keeping their identity despite relations with China and Japan. Koreans exported their own culture and transmitted Chinese culture to Japan from ancient times, but they did not attempt any ethnic mixing with the Japanese. Many ethnic groups in Manchuria lost most of their ethnic identity and were even completely assimilated with dominant groups, but Koreans kept their ethnic identity and culture intact.

It is reported that approximately half a million Koreans live in Central Asia while more than two million Koreans reside in the vast areas of Manchuria, and that they have maintained their ethnic as well as cultural identity. Although they are minorities in their respective lands, they use their own language and letters and maintain traditional Korean social institutions and life styles. At the same time, they prefer ethnic endogamy so that retention of their own physical distinctiveness as well as cultural traditions is ensured.

According to a 1986 study by the Korean Institute of Science and Technology, the average height of a modern Korean is 167.7cm for men and 155.5 cm for women. In terms of height, this means that Korean males belong to the upper middle scale and Korean females to the medium scale, compared to other Asian people. The most distinctive physical features are almond-shaped eyes, black hair and relatively high cheek bones. It may also be noted that all Korean babies are born with blue spots on the lower part of the back, which is typical of Mongolians.

## Seoul: A historic walled city

ESTABLISHED A hundred years before Columbus discovered the Americas, Seoul, the Korean capital, is an ancient city by New World standards. But compared with the antiquity of Korean history, Seoul is a relatively young.

Once the seat of kings, Seoul now is the hub of the entire nation, with a population of more than 10 million. Its rich ancient culture is readily accessible to visitors. Seoul has been the center of educational opportunities, professional training and leadership in Korea. Living in Seoul still engenders personal prestige, and so, throughout the centuries, young and old have converged on the city, taking part in a historical drama staged since the 15th century.

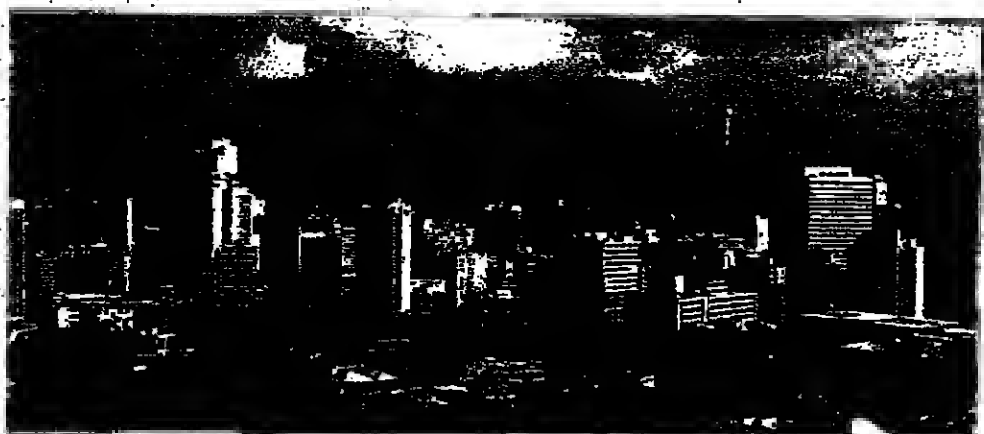
Into Seoul's rich history, a heritage has been woven which is evidenced by palaces, shrines, and monuments found over the city. For both the serious student of Korean history and the casual sightseer, Seoul holds a wealth of lore about Korea and its people. There are few cities in the world where the ultra-modern and the ancient exist side by side in such perfect harmony.

Today, Seoul is a teeming metropolis with many first-class Western-style hotels. English is spoken at many shops, bars, and restaurants. Just a few steps from many hotels is the center of the city is Tokgung Palace, which is now a public park. Its ancient tiled-roofed throne hall and annex buildings, where the king once received foreign envoys, and two stately Greco-Roman-style buildings are nestled in the shadows of new high-rise office buildings, a perfect example of Seoul's unique blend of old and new.

In the National Museum, located in front of Kyongbok Palace, the visitor can see priceless treasures of Korea's antiquity. Not far away in Ch'angdokkang Palace royal monuments can be seen, including furnished rooms where Korea's kings and their families once lived. Adjacent to Ch'angdokkang Palace is Piwon, the Secret Garden, a lovely expanse of intertwining paths linking wooded slopes, lotus ponds, and pavilions.

Just east of the Secret Garden is Ch'anggyonggung Palace, a detached palace in ancient times. It was transformed into an amusement park in the early part of the 1900s, but it has been restored.

Seoul hosts a variety of symphony concerts, operas, and recitals by local and visiting



A general view of Seoul, the capital city of Korea

musicians. The Seoul Arts Center in the southern part of Seoul, the Sejong Cultural Center, located on the main thoroughfare in downtown Seoul, the National Theatre in Namsan Park, and the Hoam Art Hall near the City Hall offer a wide range of cultural programs and performances.

Korea House, located near the center of the city, is an old-style Korean mansion which provides further insight into Korean traditions and customs.

Exquisitely prepared Korean-style meals are available, as are programs of folk music and dancing. A visit to Korea House is especially worthwhile for those with only a little time to spare.

### The Palaces and Seoul's Heritage

Much of Seoul's special lure and charm centers on its palaces, which represent a colorful history of more than 500 years.

For the average tourist on a tight schedule, a half-day visit to one of the palaces can be highly rewarding. The palaces are the most obvious sightseeing attractions in the capital, and all are conveniently located near the downtown area. For a brief moment, a visitor may catch glimpses of Korea's heritage from the worn stone-paved paths, intricately patterned murals, and the clay figures which sit on roof ridges in eternal vigilance, warding off evil.

### Palaces

Kyongbokgung Palace, located at the north end of Sejongno Street, was first built in 1394, the third year of the Choson Dynasty. It was burned during the Japanese invasion of 1592, and left in ruins until it was rebuilt in 1668. It is located in a 40 acre complex and is comprised of a number of large, impressive buildings. Kamjong-

jo, the largest palace building, served as the throne chamber and audience hall. Kyonghoo, a spacious, two-story pavilion that seems to float in a man-made pond, served as a banquet hall for royal ministers and diplomatic delegations. Hyangwonjong, nestled in the center of a lotus pond, was the place where royal family members enjoyed private occasions. Many of the country's historic stone pagodas and monuments are displayed in various parts of the complex.

Also within the walled grounds and of interest to many visitors are the National Museum of Korea and the National Folklore Museum.

A short distance away is Ch'angdokkang Palace, another favorite tourist spot. Its main gate, Tonhwangmun, is considered possibly the oldest gate in the capital city. It escaped the flames when major portions of the palace were burned during the Japanese invasion of 1592. Rebuilt in 1611, the palace was used as the official royal residence until 1910. To the present day, Naksonjae, a villa located on the palace grounds, serves as a residence for remaining members of the royal family. Piwon, the Secret Garden, also is a part of Ch'angdokkang. A serene woodland covering 78 acres, it was reserved during the Choson Dynasty for members of the royal family and palace women. It now is open to the public, but only through small, guided tours.

Just to the east of the Secret Garden is Ch'anggyonggung Palace, where visitors can get some idea of the way of life of the ancient royal family. In the restored palace complex are found well-preserved gates and arched bridges from that earlier era. The king conducted affairs of state in a stone courtyard adjacent to the main halls of the

palace. Behind the halls are the living quarters for the royal family.

Located across a broad traffic circle from City Hall is Tokgung Palace, a compound housing traditional Choson Dynasty buildings and some impressive Western-style structures. They include Ch'unggwajon, the throne room or audience hall, and Sokchojon, a Renaissance style building that was the first of its kind in Korea. It was in this palace that the Choson Dynasty, which ruled Korea for more than 500 years, drew to a tragic end when Japanese domination brought annexation of the peninsula in 1910. Tokgung originally was built as a royal villa to appease a grandson of Sejo, the seventh ruler of Choson, who was passed over twice for the throne.


The "Stone Palace," was built at the turn of the century according to a blueprint drafted by a British architect.

In a secluded garden in the heart of Seoul is found Chongmyo, a shrine housing ancestral tablets of Choson Dynasty kings and their queens. On the first Sunday in May, the courtyards and shrine buildings are used for an annual Confucian ceremonial rite that is open to the public. The presentation is enacted by descendants of the royal Yi clan to keep alive the customs and traditions of that period.

Although not a palace site, also of interest in the center of Seoul is Tapgol (Pagoda) Park, a landmark in the struggle against Japanese colonial rule. It was in this park that the March First Independent Movement of 1919 was launched, a nationwide protest against Japanese domination. Brass plaques along the east side of the park tell the story of the movement and its suppression.

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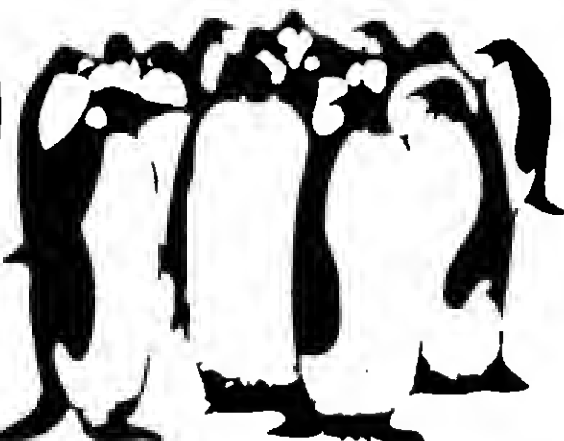


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## AROUND TOWN



## Inter.Con joins the 'World Clean Up 98'

IN KEEPING with InterContinental's world-wide commitment to the protection of the environment, Hotel InterContinental, Jordan, joined the Earth's largest community organized environmental event, the 'World Clean Up 98'. Hotel staff members participated in the World Clean Up 98 day organized locally by the Jordan Environment Society, and cleaned the Naour suburb of Amman, roads leading to the Dead Sea and the area around the factories situated along the main highway between Naour and the Dead Sea.

Hotel InterContinental joined hands with several community establishments, schools, universities and governmental bodies in a unified effort to draw the public's attention to the importance of preserving the environment.



## SCRAPBOOK

## Blasphemy on the Silver Screen

By Rasheed Al Roussan  
Special to The Star

IN A split second, the lights flicker off and the hall goes pitch black.

Suddenly, the hypnotizing screen opens, and your blood pressure shoots up. Your brain can't bare the sizzling heat inside your lungs, and your veins melt, during an endless trial of horrifying scenes.

Afterwards, the lights are turned on, and you try to figure out what happened. "A dream perhaps, or a blackout." Suddenly, your eyes blink, your brain starts to function again, and your heart-rate becomes normal.

This is the priceless thrill of movie animation, the art of virtual reality. The moment the screen opens, you become mesmerized. *Armageddon*, a movie that is one of a kind, is one of the outstanding animated films ever made. You won't find monsters, serial killers or psychos. This time you'll be staring at a different kind of murderer: an asteroid, that is about to become the unexpected guest of Planet Earth.

Directed by Michael Bay, the film presents one of the ongoing debates of this century: the impact of falling debris on earth. Geologists and NASA scientists have taken a great deal of interest in asteroids that have crashed down on earth.

Scientific evidence proved that the earth was subjected to different environmental impacts. One of these were the extinction of dinosaurs because the earth was struck by a meteor, creating crater that can still be seen in Mexico. The impact went far beyond to North America with an estimated diameter of 200 Km.

The impact didn't only destroy life on earth then, but created long-term dangers for life today. Water vapor, oceans chlorine, and nitrogen from the air resulted in acid rain. The crater is only a sample. Ceres, an asteroid with a diameter of 1030 Km is the largest. Next to this are Pallas and Vesta, with diameters of about 550 Km.

Due to global warming, pollution, and holes in the Ozone, many say that the end of the earth is at hand. Asteroids and comets are other new enemies.

We could soon be hosting a titanic asteroid coming towards us, eating up everything in its way. A farfetched notion? For Hollywood, it is a dream come true.

*Armageddon* has had a great impact. The word is described in the Bible as the end of the world. *Armageddon* is the name of a battlefield, that will witness the final fight between good and evil. The Bible states that all armies of the world will gather in Palestine, on a mountain called Megiddo. There, the wrath of God will destroy the whole universe, marking the Day of Judgment.

However, judgment day for Michael Bay is different. The magnitude of the visual effects is so powerful that one is 'withdrawn' to a world of animated nightmares: beyond the wildest imagination. Parts of asteroids thunder down to earth sweeping the entire city of Paris, New York and Hong Kong, using the latest gadgetry in computer technology.

Animators turned the film into a sophisticated stage set where the sky comes down as hellish rocks. The incredible visual effects of huge man-made asteroids transformed the cinema screen into a real life drama. The audiences were gripped by the sound techniques, and the special thumping music.

Bruce Willis, acting as the head manager of a crack team of oil drillers, is appointed by the US government to save the planet from the danger of a killer asteroid. As people expect, the mission succeeds, but with several casualties. One gets the feeling in the end that the multi-million dollar production was about America saving the world, though this time, by emancipating humanity from a Biblical prophecy.

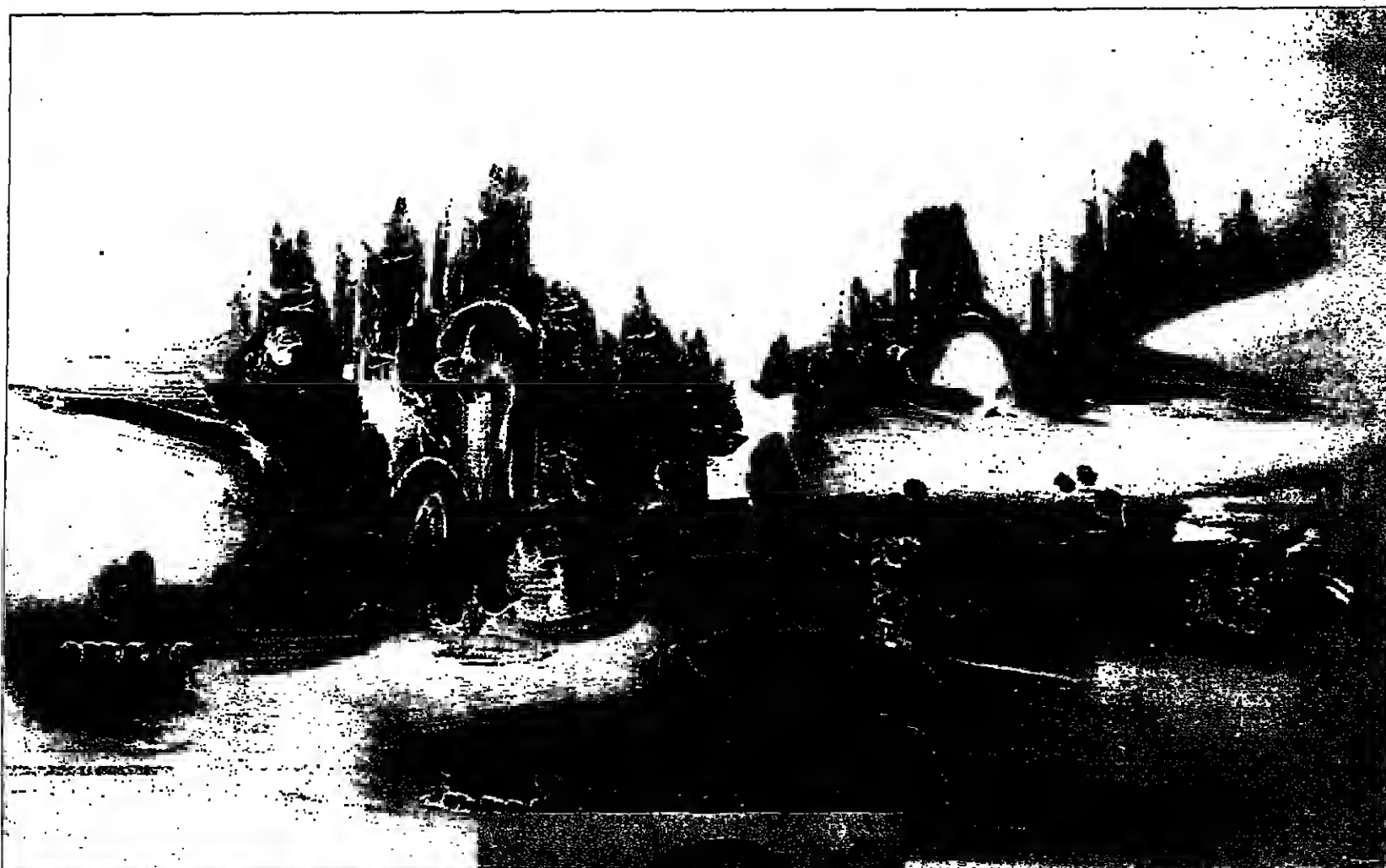
The US media has been keen to portray America as the world's savior. Everybody remembers Roland Emmerich's film *Independence Day*, the alien invasion of the world. As usual, the US army succeeds again in protecting humanity from alien tyranny. David, a Jewish American scientist, is the missing hero of the film. He saves the world from a global war, and they live peacefully ever after.

*Armageddon* is not an exception. Movies of this kind are made to show people that nothing can stand against the world's most powerful nation, not even God himself!

Movie blasphemy is taking a new step towards advocating political stands, where saving the world from disasters has become one of the emblems of the US national charisma.

Close your eyes now, and try to imagine a large asteroid heading towards your land. If you need help, just dial NASA's phone number, and I am sure they will send someone there to save you.

## The romantic realm of Polis on canvas



By Kofi Attah  
Special to The Star

THE BEAUTY of any piece of art is usually dictated by the artist's inspirations, and by how he views the world around him. This is especially true for Mohammed Abdul Rahman Polis from Bethlehem—the city of love and peace—who has been painting and exhibiting his works since 1971.

His early works brought together nature, his childhood and his Arab surroundings and heritage; the many blazing colors brought these subjects to life. Later, his works explored the beauty of the woman, as well as Islamic decorations and patterns. The conduct of the world and how people treated each other, were other constant themes.

Polis's paintings are all highly personal. Born in Bethlehem, with mixed Jordanian and Palestinian roots, his paintings reflect the geographical shifts of the region.

The 35 paintings currently on display at the Amman City Hall aptly depicts the artist's inspirations, his fleeting memories of childhood, and his deep observation of nature. "I paint according to the musical heartbeats of the woman," Polis disclosed, whose paintings are ignited by the body movements of women in every form.

In one painting, 'Desire', he uses the eye, the most communicative organ in the body to diffuse his message and to confirm his remarkable admiration of the woman. 'Desire' depicts a man and a woman in a setting that communicates a feeling of mutual love. This emotion radiates even stronger through his other work entitled 'Blue Night'. "I am strange. I like to be different from others; everybody is talking about an ordinary night, whilst I see a blue night," he declared.



Polis

In 'Blue Night', he uses deep and light blue colors to paint a group of women clustered around in the sitting position, and exposes the natural qualities of gentleness and tenderness among all women. The artist testifies to these qualities, "The woman is soft, tender and loving, and everything else you can think of that is good."

Although the woman forms the subject of most of his enterprises, he also likes to link social events with romance. In his painting titled 'The

Gate of Amman', he used his fingernails to enhance the image of Amman—the large gate, and the smaller ones surrounding it, represent the love of the city and its people. He tries to stimulate the visitor to share the anxiety and aspirations of the people living within the gate.

His oil paintings surprise audiences, by deviating sharply from his romantic theme to architecture. In the painting at the entrance of the Exhibition Hall, he welcomes the visitor with an old Arabic architectural design. The painting indicates his Arab background and cultural heritage, seen through the eye of a child in an Arabic and Islamic environment.

Nature and heritage has always intrigued him, even when he was young. He likes to delve deep into these subjects, using colors that set off every emotion. He demonstrates this in the work named 'Strange Dream', which is full of evocative blues and whites, and evokes nightmares, and the bizarre world around us. Dreams are effective form of narrative, that embrace all time periods, and enact the human mind's transition from illusion to realism; from the past to the present, and then to the future. Dreams reveal his inner visions. 'Strange Dream' gives the visitor a sense of encouragement and hope. Mohammed Polis is creating a new mythology of his own and is paving the way for future Arab artists through illusions and realities. He is a romantic, an observer of nature, and at times a dreamer.

The exhibition proves that the artist has skill and versatility in abundance, and the works of Mohammed Polis can be seen in Hall 2 at the Amman City Hall, Ras Al Ain, until 3 October.

## Peace press trip to Jordan goes smoothly

A PEACE trip to Jordan has been organized by British Airways and British Mediterranean Airways in order to promote Jordan in the tourist market. Twelve journalists representing internationally acclaimed publications like *The Times*, *The Boston Herald*, *Travel Weekly*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, will be accompanied by Mr Des Hetherington, Chief Executive, British Mediterranean Airways. Mr Hetherington said, "We hope that this trip will enhance Jordan's standing on the international tourist map." He added that "these events show our commitment to promoting leisure travel to our destinations in the area."

The four-day trip will consist of an extensive sightseeing tour of Jordan's most popular archaeological sites. Starting from the Dead Sea location of Jesus' baptism, and will be followed by a visit to the town of Madaba where exquisite Byzantine mosaics were uncovered in the late 19th Century—including the famous 6th Century map of Palestine.

After a traditional lunch at Haret Joudna in Madaba, the group will

depart for Mount Nebo—a peak claimed to be the site of the tomb of Moses, which descends 1500 meters into the Wadi Al-Mujib Canyon towards Karak.

Upon arrival in Petra, the group will ride a camel or horse as far as the Siq entrance, then walk the 1km long Siq to Al Khazneh (the Treasury).

A climb to the High Place of Sacrifice follows, where the views of the city to the west and Wadi Musa to the east are breathtaking. They will then continue on to Qasr Al Bint before ascending to Al Deir, a monastery dating from the 3rd Century BC.

The group will get to experience the true Bedouin lifestyle by camping in the Wadi Rum desert, where the spectacular scenery was featured in the film 'Lawrence of Arabia'. sip Bedouin tea and sleep beneath the stars. The group will then head out to Aqaba, Jordan's aquatic playground for some scuba diving, snorkeling, and water sports.

A farewell dinner will be held on the final day, hosted by the Jordanian Minister for Tourism Mr Aqel



Biltaji.

"Like the Concorde trip earlier this month, this trip is designed to show the world what British Airways already knows—Jordan is a spectacular tourist destination," said Mark Hodson, BA manager, Jordan. "I'm looking forward to welcoming these

journalists and then receiving their rave reviews." Finally, Mr Hetherington extended his appreciation to Mr Seif Saudi, managing partner of Jordan Eco-Tours, and Mr Elias Khazooz, Tour Guide, for their warm welcome and assistance.

## AGENDA

## Exhibitions

■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon at the Al Mashreq Gallery, Shmashan, 11 November until 1 November.

■ The Solidarity exhibition by Palestinian artist Makhoul and Indian painter Alnoor Mitha continues at the National Gallery of Fine Arts until 3 October.

■ A joint exhibition for Arab artists continues at the Hamorabi Gallery until 15 October.

■ More than 120 works of Jordanian and Arab artists are currently on display at the Fakhir Al Nisa Zeid Gallery in the Ministry of Culture.

ceremony will be at 6.30pm, and the exhibition will run until 26 October.

## Concert

■ The Jordanian piano trio of Rula Nabeel, Tala Tutunji, and Tarek Younis will perform a concert at the Royal Cultural Center in cooperation with the Jerusalem Forum and the Goethe Institute at 8 pm on the 7 October. Works by Mozart, Brahms, Debussy and Schubert will be played by the trio.

## Film

■ The 1980 film 'Diva' will be shown at the French Cultural Center during two sessions, 6.30 and 8.30, on the 5 October. The film is about a man hunting his dream woman, and stars W. Fernandez and P. Andrei (with Arabic translation).







# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

## Un Jordanien impliqué dans les attentats anti-américains

Deux hommes soupçonnés d'être impliqués dans les attentats anti-américains à Nairobi et Dar-es-Salaam au mois d'août dernier ont été inculpés cette semaine par un tribunal à New York pour meurtre et activités de complot. Les deux hommes, identifiés comme Mohammed Sadiq Odeh et Mohammed Rashed Daoud al-'Owhali, connu également sous le nom de Khalid Salim Saleh ben Rashed, ont été inculpés de quatre chefs d'accusation, dont celui de meurtre, pour les attentats du 7 août visant les ambassades américaines au Kenya et en Tanzanie qui avaient fait 258 morts et plusieurs milliers de blessés.

Selon les chefs d'accusation, les deux hommes sont les membres présumés du groupe terroriste al-Qaida, le groupe international contrôlé par le financier d'origine saoudienne Oussama ben Laden (voir photo). Ils sont également soupçonnés d'avoir participé à plusieurs actes de terrorisme international entre 1994 et 1998.

«Ces deux personnes sont accusées d'avoir tué des centaines de personnes civiles innocentes», a déclaré le procureur fédéral de New York, Mary Jo White, dans un communiqué. «Les événements d'aujourd'hui marquent un pas en avant dans le processus visant à traduire les responsables de ces attentats, contre la communauté internationale, devant la justice», a-t-elle ajouté.

Les deux hommes avaient été arrêtés à la fin du mois d'août dans la capitale kenyane et remis peu de temps après à la sûreté fédérale américaine (FBI). Selon l'accusation, al-'Owhali est Yéménite. Sadiq Odeh est quant à lui Jordanien. S'ils sont coupables, les deux hommes risquent des peines d'emprisonnement à vie sans possibilité de libération conditionnelle.



### Éclaboussures

#### Pharmacies, s'abstenir !

Côté médecins, on a confiance. Oh, sans excès, depuis que, au lieu de déceler une grossesse - ce que n'importe quel cabinet vous fait en un tour de main - un docteur jordanien a cru, du haut de sa science, diagnostiquer après analyses coûteuses une infection urinaire et prescrit des antibiotiques à la future mère. Mais passons, errare humanum est. En revanche, côté pharmaciens, c'est plutôt ignorer humanum est. «Ma petite est enrhumée, j'aimerais des gouttes pour le nez, s'il vous plaît». Elle sort un sirop. «Non, des gouttes, s'il vous plaît». «Ah...!», elle sort un autre sirop. «Non, des gouttes pour le nez, la c'est munkhar». Troisième potin. «Non, pour le nez, blati mrahha (ma fille a un rhume), munkharha msaker, quelque chose pour lui déboucher le nez, MUNKHAR». Et se pointant obstinément le doigt sur le p'tit bout de nez de ma mère. «Aah... des gouttes pour les enfants».

Un petit problème de santé vous taquine ? Parcourez les pharmacies, c'est étonnant. Vous récolterez des réponses aussi hétéroclites que : «Moi, ch'ai pas, allez voir le médecin» (avec un pen de chance, vous repartirez avec l'adresse du copain), «Achetez-moi ça et tout ira bien» ou «Ce n'est rien, ça va passer tout seul (mais dire exotiquement ce que c'est, ça j'peux pas)». Et le confrère d'ajouter : «Allez, sans tarder chez le docteur, cela pourrait être grave». Peut-être s'en trouvera-t-il un pour vous donner quelques explications de base, celles dont, par bon sens, vous vous doutiez déjà.

Maintenant, vous cherchez un médicament : «Ceci, c'est excellent, on ne peut trouver mieux là». Vous vous enquêrez alors de l'existence d'un produit similaire de fabrication jordanienne : «Où... il y aurait... peut-être éventuellement... Mais le premier est bien meilleur !». La composition est la même, mais bien entendu le produit étranger pèse plus lourd dans la poche de ces marchands de pilules, puisque trois fois plus cher. De simples commerçants. Ils le sont tout autant lorsqu'ils délivrent, sans s'inquiéter de leur usage, antibiotiques et autres médicaments à utiliser avec précaution. On pourrait se shooter avec la complexité de ces pharmaciens satisfaits d'encasser le bénéfice. Finalement, profiter humanum est...

Mieux vaudrait s'inventer idiot ou naïf, comme jadis : «M'sieur le Pharmacien m'a donné des tablettes et le mal a disparu, ce doit être vraiment un très grand savant !». Mais vous risquez d'acheter un médicament qui n'a rien à voir avec vos maux de santé.

Où alors vous êtes bien informé. Pas besoin d'avoir suivi la fac ! Les bons conseils de maman, les cours de biologie du lycée et un peu de documentation glanée dans de bons magazines suffiront à coloniser les brèches d'ignorance et de négligence de ces boutiquiers.

Et sur les onctes d'emballage, abstenez-vous de lire les remarques du style : «Si les symptômes persistent, veuillez consulter votre médecin ou (pire) votre pharmacien».

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh



Une coalition de 53 députés s'est formée pour notamment demander au gouvernement de mettre fin à une normalisation «au service de l'État hébreu».

### Le gouvernement

Tarawneh peut désormais travailler tranquille. Jeudi dernier, il a obtenu la confiance de 64 députés sur les 79 présents. C'est le deuxième cabinet à obtenir un soutien aussi massif depuis 1989 et l'ouverture démocratique du pays.

Avant le vote, les députés avaient discuté pendant deux jours-marathon le programme gouvernemental présenté auparavant au cours d'une session extraordinaire.

L'intervention la plus marquante fut celle du député Abdul-Karim Doughmi, au nom de 53 de ses collègues appartenant à trois blocs différents : «Solidarité», «Ensemble» et «Rassemblement», plus un certain nombre d'indépendants. Une première dans les annales de la vie parlementaire jordanienne. Dans son discours uni-

taire, Abdul-Karim Doughmi a exigé des solutions concrètes aux grands problèmes du pays : la pauvreté, le chômage, la stagnation économique, les difficultés de l'agriculture, la réforme administrative, la lutte contre la corruption... Les députés de la coalition ont aussi demandé l'arrêt d'une normalisation «au service de l'État hébreu», et ont insisté sur le renforcement des relations avec les États arabes, qui entourent la Jordanie.

Certes, la coalition a réclamé «la poursuite du programme d'ajustement économique et la reconstruction de l'économie nationale», mais elle s'est montrée critique à l'égard des privatisations.

Plus important : les députés de ce groupement ont annoncé qu'ils demandaient au nouveau gouvernement «une confiance

sous conditions». En clair, ils lui accordent un délai de cinq ou six mois pour appliquer ce qu'il a promis. Bien entendu, la menace est surtout formelle mais elle a le mérite d'être originale. Les Chambres précédentes n'en avaient jamais usé !

Les discours des autres députés, représentants des blocs ou des partis politiques ou même des courants, étaient encore plus exigeants concernant certains dossiers : l'eau, la Palestine, la nécessité de réviser la loi sur les publications, la sécurité sociale, les libertés publiques, les pots-de-vin...

### «Tout reste à faire»

Il n'y a finalement pas eu de surprises dans les résultats des votes. Les trois partis d'opposition (gauche démocratique, Baath, Parti communiste) ont voté contre, les députés islamistes indépendants sont apparus divisés et la coalition, sauf quelques défections, a largement plébiscité le programme de Faysal Tarawneh.

Il est vrai que le Premier ministre, peu avant le vote et même lors de sa conférence de presse samedi dernier, avait renouvelé ses bonnes intentions à l'égard du groupe le plus fort du Parlement. Il savait que le soutien de la coalition était décisif pour obtenir

une large majorité.

Tout en maintenant les grandes lignes de ses devanciers, Tarawneh s'est montré réaliste et pragmatique. En tout cas, suffisamment humble pour ne rien céder au bout du compte. Les exemples de sa duplicité ne manquent pas :

Il affirme que la Jordanie n'est pas liée par un pacté non arabe, mais en même temps, insiste sur «la stratégie arabe de la paix». En bref, il n'est pas question de remettre en cause le traité signé avec Israël.

Le chômage «ne peut pas être seulement combattu par le renvoi des ouvriers non jordaniens», déclarait Tarawneh. On attendait alors des idées pratiques pour lutter contre le fléau. Le Premier ministre s'est défilé en se contentant de rappeler que «le chômage était une question de souveraineté».

La corruption : «Ce n'est pas généralisé et ce qu'on en dit est exagéré, et pourtant nous allons la combattre là où elle se trouve...».

La loi sur les publications : «Nous n'avons pas l'intention de l'amender, mais si les députés le veulent, nous respectons leurs volontés».

Au total, pas d'engagements précis. «Tout a été dit et tout reste à faire», remarque un commentateur du quotidien Ad-Doustour. Ce couplet

s'accompagne souvent d'un refrain à la mode : «Le gouvernement a obtenu la confiance de la majorité de la Chambre, il lui reste à gagner celle du peuple», qui n'a jamais été aussi faible sous les cabinets Majali.

Pour y arriver, le gouvernement sait très bien qu'il faut des mesures concrètes, même si, comme le reconnaît lui-même le Premier ministre, la marge de manœuvre est limitée. C'est par des mesures sociales que le

nouveau gouvernement pourrait faire ses preuves et marquer les esprits (réduction du prix du pain, augmentation des salaires...). Dans le même sens, un dialogue constant avec les institutions de la société civile et une détente sur la question des libertés publiques sont sans aucun doute nécessaires.

Par ailleurs, une certaine fermeté à l'égard du gouvernement israélien s'impose. La semaine dernière, le Premier ministre a convoqué l'ambassadeur israélien pour exprimer l'inquiétude de la Jordanie après les affrontements d'Oum el-Fahm entre forces de police et Arabes israéliens. Si on ajoute à cela, la condamnation récente de la coopération militaire israélo-jordanienne, on constate qu'un souffle nouveau traverse la politique étrangère jordanienne : peut-être l'annonce d'un rapprochement plus décisif avec les États arabes.

«Changement» dans la continuité : pourrait être le slogan du cabinet Tarawneh. Mais les Jordaniens, qui voient à l'horizon un avenir meilleur, attendent beaucoup plus : «Pour aller plus loin, cette fois, il faut vraiment changer !».

Sébastien Weiss

### Politique

## Cette fois, il faut vraiment changer

80% : qui dit mieux ? Faysal Tarawneh a obtenu des députés une confiance-record pour son gouvernement. Mais il ne s'agit pas d'un plébiscite aveugle. Le Premier ministre l'a bien compris. Les parlementaires et le peuple attendent beaucoup de lui.



Faysal Tarawneh a su, à merveille, ménager la chèvre et le chou pour convaincre.

Ad-Doustour

## Le Moyen-Orient dans la presse française Et le processus de paix, nom d'une pipe !



Arafat et Clinton en janvier dernier. Déjà le processus de paix était sacrifié sur l'autel de la «Monikagate-mania».

La presse française est toujours branchée sur le Monikagate à Washington. Bernard Guetta, dans l'édition du 17 septembre du *Journal d'Observation*, titre son editorial sur «La découverte en danger» et dénonce cette «inverosimilitude» : «L'Amérique est une terre d'illusions. Elle l'est car elle est la plus grande démocratie du monde, mais aucun démocrate ne peut aujourd'hui se reconnaître en elle. En ces jours sombres, l'Amérique est un pays d'insécurité... Du coup, le journaliste n'hésite pas à aller chercher ailleurs le leadership mondial : Le monde a besoin d'un nouveau pôle. Le monde a besoin de l'Europe, d'une Europe unie, forte, décidée à faire entendre sa voix, celle de la démocratie».

La même semaine, *Le Point* rappelle que sur le dossier du processus de paix, il faut néanmoins encore compter sur l'Amérique de Clinton : «Seuls les États-Unis peuvent relancer la négociation, éviter le pire. Au Proche-Orient, plus que partout ailleurs, une Amérique affaiblie est un grave facteur d'instabilité... L'Amérique n'est plus, pour l'instant, en mesure d'assumer véritablement son rôle dans cette région névralgique. Situation dangereuse. Car, sur ce gigantesque arc de crise qui va du Levant au Golfe persique et à l'Asie centrale, se préparent les vagues tempêtes de demain». Dans le même article, le chroniqueur, Pierre Bérault, dresse un bilan peu avantageux du processus de paix, cinq ans après Oslo : «L'espoir est mortifère... Ruben est tombé sous les balles d'un soldat du grand Israël. Arafat est relégué au rang de gouverneur d'une sorte de bananistan».

Pour le quotidien *Le Monde* (26 septembre), la diplomatie américaine s'illustre dans le conflit israélo-palestinien. Georges Marion évoque la visite infructueuse du médiateur américain dans la région. «Dix jours d'incessantes bavettes entre Jérusalem, Ramallah, Gaza, Le Caire et Amman n'auront pas permis à Dennis

Ross, de rapprocher les points de vue des Israéliens et ceux des Palestiniens... Le journaliste ajoute qu'«à l'évidence, c'est la confiance mutuelle qui, dans cette affaire, fait le plus défaut. C'est Israël, on occupe les arabes en général, et les Palestiniens en particulier, de ne cesser que le moment propice pour frapper Israël dans le dos. M. Arafat d'ailleurs, notamment soupçonné de garder ouverte, par Hamas interposé, l'option terroriste. Les Palestiniens, quant à eux, sont convaincus que M. Netanyahu utilise son pouvoir pour rendre impraticable le chemin tracé à Oslo. Il poursuit en parlant d'une «survente» : «D'autant plus vive qu'après être résignés à se ranger derrière la bannière américaine, les Palestiniens ne peuvent que constater la faiblesse du président Clinton, encloué dans le scandale Lewinsky».

### Signe de l'Iran à Washington

«La riposte contre les talibans se prépare» est le deuxième article que *Le Point* publie sur le Proche-Orient. Selon l'hebdomadaire, deux scénarios sont possibles pour l'Iran : «Des frappes chirurgicales par l'aviation ou une conquête territoriale limitée, du type «zone tampon», à l'instar d'Israël au Liban sud. Car, au-delà de la mort des neuf ressortissants, l'Iran veut contraindre à tout prix la montée en puissance des chevaliers de Dieu afghans et sunnites».

Toujours sur l'Iran, Khatami «cherche le dialogue à l'ONU», selon *Liberation* (23 septembre). «Confronté à une double pression, celle provoquée par la situation en Afghanistan et celle que les milieux conservateurs font peser sur son gouvernement, le président iranien a pourtant cherché, aux Nations unies, à donner l'image d'un pays cherchant le dialogue, aussi bien avec les États-Unis qu'avec les talibans».

D'autre part, Jean-Pierre Perrin qualifie la condamnation du terrorisme de Khatami, de «signe adressé à Clinton, qui avait appelé la communauté internationale à s'unir pour mieux lutter contre cette menace». Le journaliste ajoute enfin que cette déclaration, «si elle ne cite pas explicitement les États-Unis, constitue un nouveau «petit pas» en direction de Washington».

Nahed Al-Khlouf

## Polis, personne ne parle !

Après Amman, les œuvres de l'artiste palestinien iront, d'ici deux semaines, égayer Irbid. Embarquement pour une traversée onirique, dans le silence des réflexions.

Son nom fouette comme le pinceau rageur sur une toile blanche. Évocateur grecque d'une cité en ordre ou autoritarisme en marche mêlé aux paroles sans concession d'une pop-star anglaise ? Ces définitions éponymes pourraient correspondre au physique de notre homme : trapu, lippu, cou de taureau, il ne manque plus à Mohammed Polis que le nom de son père.

Polis est un artiste qui ne se contente pas de jouer les copys à New York. La surprise est d'autant plus grande, quand on découvre ses peintures qui n'ont rien d'une organisation calculée ou d'un régime au pas

de l'oe. S'ouvre devant nos yeux quelque peu incrédules, il faut bien le dire, un espace d'émotions où seul le pinceau semble le maître des lieux.

«Il tient son art de l'enfance, de l'innocence et de la spontanéité qu'il puise dans la nature, dit de Polis le poète tunisien Abdul Razak Al-Jamali, il est tantôt amoureux, tantôt rêveur et souvent observateur. Son art n'est pas définissable et son tableau commence là où il est censé se terminer». Polis, plus près de l'abîme que de la brute épaisse.

N'est-il pas né, il y a 48 ans,

à Béthléem, ville d'amour et de paix ? Depuis ces matins-éclins où il suivait son père dans son atelier - «il me réveillait très tôt pour que je l'observe en train de sculpter», le petit Mohammed a rapidement gravi les échelons de la reconnaissance. Récompensé, dans le monde arabe et en Occident, son œuvre, «dialogue entre les chevaliers de l'art», a beaucoup voyagé (Belgique, Pays-Bas, Allemagne, Yémen, Irak, Égypte...). Depuis 14 ans, il vit dans le pays de sa femme, une artiste tunisienne. Mais il revient souvent sur les lieux de ses

débuts : «J'ai décidé de faire une expo en Jordanie parce que j'ai toujours la nostalgie de ce pays où j'ai grandi et où je garde de bons amis».

Induite de l'exposition qui vient de s'achever à Ras-el-Ain et que l'on retrouvera bientôt à Irbid : «La musique et la couleur», qui, en 35 tableaux, se fonde dans une lumière éblouissante et harmonieuse.

Mais Mohammed Polis ne se contente pas de peindre. Selon la peintre jordanienne Najis Andalusi, ses toiles sont aussi des mots que des oreilles pressées ne sauraient entendre : «Ses paroles s'adressent directement au cœur pour y faire jaillir des sources éternelles de splendeur et de beauté. Les mots même sortent d'entre ses doigts et les couleurs en disent assez, pour que les bouches se taisent et les yeux se ferment». Difficile de faire critique plus élogieuse.

### Poupon du tableau

Cependant pas de longs discours chez Polis, plutôt des suggestions. Ses personnages sont réduits à de simples inflexions du pinceau : silhouettes longilignes, contours à la fois pastel et léchés. Tout au long de l'exposition, on retrouve à plusieurs reprises ces yeux effrayés qui vous fixent avec angoisse, ce regard insaisissable dont l'horreur en dit long sur l'âme tourmentée de l'artiste palestinien : «Mais je veux toujours garder mon attachement à une pureté à venir», commente-t-il, optimiste.

Le peintre varie les techniques selon son inspiration (expressionnisme, figuratif ou même surréalisme). Inclassable, il n'obéit à aucune règle ou norme mais son œil scrutateur est toujours celui d'un impressionniste, tantôt par l'abstrait. «Ce goût pour l'abstrait est chez moi une façon d'appeler les spectateurs à une sorte d'introspection intellectuelle. L'art abstrait apporte des signes et des symboles qui permettent de donner aux tableaux toutes les interprétations possibles», explique Polis avant de préciser : «L'espace dans ma peinture est le poupon du tableau qui pousse le spectateur à se poser des questions. Cet espace lui découvre des horizons nouveaux, fait partie intégrante du tableau».

Youssef Abu Saleh



Des yeux effrayés qui vous fixent avec angoisse, un regard insaisissable dont l'horreur en dit long sur l'âme tourmentée de l'artiste palestinien.



Le mot de la semaine

PAIN.

Comme il s'agit d'un mot, il faut d'abord se demander si le pain est un objet ou un sujet. C'est la question que se pose le philosophe Jean-Luc Marion dans son livre *Le pain* (Grasset, 1997). Le pain est-il un objet ou un sujet ? C'est la question que se pose le philosophe Jean-Luc Marion dans son livre *Le pain* (Grasset, 1997). Le pain est-il un objet ou un sujet ? C'est la question que se pose le philosophe Jean-Luc Marion dans son livre *Le pain* (Grasset, 1997).

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Véronique Abu-Nijeh.



Le pain, composé essentiel de notre alimentation.

## C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman  
Cinéma

Cycle Les années 80.

Divas, film de Jean-Jacques Beineix (1980), couleur, sous-titré en arabe. Une des plus grandes soprano du monde refuse de se laisser enregistrer. Un chasseur de sons ne respecte pas sa volonté. Sa passion va l'entraîner dans une implacable chasse à l'homme... Séances au Centre culturel français le lundi 5 octobre à 18h30 et 20h30.

Exposition

Les sculptures de l'artiste Lamia Jarrar sont au CCF jusqu'au 26 octobre. Vernissage le mercredi 7 à 18h30.

Marc Lavergne, chercheur au CNRS

## «Le pouvoir jordanien se trompe»

Deux ans après la publication d'un ouvrage consacré à la Jordanie (1), Marc Lavergne, spécialiste français du monde arabe, est en visite dans le pays. Dans un entretien au Jourdain, il porte un regard sans concession sur le royaume hashémite.

Marc Lavergne refuse la langue de bois. Pas de discours convenu dans la bouche de ce chercheur au CNRS, qui fonde à Amman, à la fin des années 80, une antenne du CERMOC (Centre d'études et de recherches sur le Moyen-Orient contemporain). Pas de prospectives à l'emporte-pièce non plus.

«Elles relèvent de Dieu», dit-il. Cet arabophone de 45 ans, physique à la Lawrence d'Arabie et sourire avenant, n'hésite pas à décrire les maux d'une Jordanie

inquiète pour son avenir. À cet égard, le chercheur conseille sans précaution : «Une façon de maîtriser cette angoisse, c'est de connaître son passé». Le Jourdain : Connaître son passé, c'est accepter de revenir sur Septembre noir ? Pensez-vous que cela soit possible ?

Marc Lavergne : Cela serait très bien de pouvoir le faire. Mais je ne suis pas sûr que les temps sont mûrs. Cette question de Septembre noir est trop bonne et ignorée car tous les ac-

teurs n'ont pas raconté leur histoire. Du côté palestinien, du côté de l'armée ou du Palais, personne n'a écrit. Quelques journalistes ont raconté mais cela ne suffit pas.

En outre, la question des relations entre Palestiniens et Transjordaniens n'est pas close et n'est pas traitée encore aujourd'hui de manière à concilier les deux composantes de la nation jordanienne. Parce que cela s'inscrit dans un cadre régional qui n'est pas réglé (le sort des Palestiniens, les relations des pays arabes avec Israël). Difficile dans ces conditions de faire le bilan de Septembre noir, alors que les options offertes à la Jordanie sont un peu les mêmes qu'à l'époque. Un auteur étranger ne peut pas accélérer les choses. C'est aux intellectuels et aux hommes politiques jordanien de le faire. Le jour où ils pourront et voudront le faire.

Le Jourdain : Il n'existe pas vraiment de nation jordanienne. N'est-ce pas là le plus grand échec du régime ?

M. L. : Une nation, c'est vouloir vivre ensemble. Ici, ce n'est pas du tout évident. Mais si les gens avaient le choix, ils continueraient à vivre ensemble, la majorité d'entre eux resterait ici. Les cultures des Transjordaniens et des Palestiniens sont très proches. De plus, l'urbanisation devrait avoir rapproché les gens. Tout le monde a les mêmes modes de vie, les mêmes besoins, les mêmes envies.

Je crois qu'il n'y a pas eu de rapprochement plus intense, parce que les autorités jordaniennes et palestiniennes ont joué le registre de la séparation des gens et ne les ont pas poussés à se réunir, malgré la citoyenneté commune.

Le pays fonctionne sur le tribalisme : c'est un moyen de diviser pour régner. C'est là en

effet un échec du pouvoir.

Malgré les grands discours «deux peuples, une nation», la réalité était différente. Mais c'était aussi en maintenant l'identité palestinienne, une façon de leur garder une chance de rentrer un jour.

Je ne juge pas mais il y avait sans doute d'autres façons plus humaines, plus égalitaires d'intégrer les Palestiniens. Il fallait trouver le juste milieu entre leur droit de rentrer un jour. Ce n'est pas facile.

Le Jourdain : Le tribalisme, c'est diviser pour mieux régner. Qu'entendez-vous par là ?

M. L. : C'est construire l'État sur la concurrence entre les groupes. C'est maintenir la Jordanie dans l'état où elle était au début du siècle. Chacun ne peut trouver son destin que dans ce cadre-là (trouver un travail, un logement...). Cet archaïsme fonctionne car cela permet à chacun de trouver une place mais cela rend tout le monde prisonnier.

C'est un motif d'échec du développement de la Jordanie, d'échec d'une conscience nationale (sens civique, sens collectif, construire quelque chose pour l'avenir). En Jordanie au contraire, il n'y a pas de construction à long terme : chacun pense d'abord à l'intérêt de son petit groupe.

De plus, tribalisme et corruption vont de pair. Voilà les grands maux de la Jordanie d'aujourd'hui qui du coup ne peut pas avancer. Nous sommes dans un système où l'argent est siphonné par cer-

tains groupes, où la corruption n'a pas de freins : elle n'est pas contrôlée ou équilibrée par l'État.

Le Jourdain : Comment s'exprime cette corruption ?

M. L. : On s'aperçoit que l'écart social s'accroît de plus en plus entre les quartiers riches et les quartiers pauvres. Et cet écart ne peut pas être expliqué par une production jordanienne de biens et de services. Il y a une crise dans ce pays dont les ressources traditionnelles se sont beaucoup amoindries. Mais cela n'empêche pas les grandes fortunes de s'élever. Donc il y a une corruption qui gangrène dangereusement la société. C'est de notoriété publique même si en Jordanie, c'est difficile d'en parler car cela monte très haut dans la société.

La menace pour l'unité nationale, la difficulté de construire l'identité nationale viennent de cet écart social injustifié : dégradation des conditions de vie pour une majorité et augmentation des richesses pour une minorité qui est prioritaire dans les choix de l'État.

Le Jourdain : L'État n'est donc pas neutre ?

M. L. : Il est clairement d'un côté de la balance, d'autant qu'il n'y a pas de contre-pouvoirs. Ici, les pouvoirs sont détenus à tous les niveaux par les mêmes personnes, par les mêmes groupes.

Le Jourdain : Cela s'est accompagné ces derniers mois d'un recul des li-

## «Tribalisme et corruption vont de pair».

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Les Palestiniens du camp de Baqaa. Les maisons en dur ont remplacé les tentes. Mais après plusieurs générations, la question de leur intégration n'est toujours pas close.

bertés publiques...

M. L. : J'ai le sentiment que le processus de paix est synonyme de retour en arrière, par rapport au mouvement de démocratisation amorcé en 1989. Le traité de paix signé avec Israël en 1994 n'était pas satisfaisant pour la population jordanienne qu'il a dit et qui a commencé à se mobiliser contre le processus de paix. Pour le pouvoir, cette réaction n'était pas acceptable.

Plus grave, ce n'était pas acceptable pour les Américains et les Israéliens. Finalement l'indépendance de la Jordanie est réduite par cette alliance stratégique avec Israël - car on n'est allé beaucoup plus loin qu'un traité de paix avec des accords militaires entre Israël, la Turquie et la Jordanie.

En fait, plus le processus de paix est bloqué, plus on considère ici qu'il faut verrouiller. Pourtant, le refus du traité de paix par une partie des forces politiques jordaniennes pouvait être géré dans un cadre démocratique, au Parlement, avec des discussions.

Dans un premier temps, le roi était sincère dans la démocratisation du pays. Puis il a

pris peur, parce qu'il a été habitué pendant longtemps à gérer le pays tout seul et que c'est plus rassurant. Mais le pouvoir se trompe. S'il veut continuer à gouverner le pays comme il l'a toujours fait.

Le refus du traité tient au fait que la population n'a pas été consultée. Il y a eu un déficit de communication. À force de ne pas se parler, de jouer un jeu qui n'est pas sincère, on n'a plus d'interlocuteur en face de soi. C'est là le véritable danger pour la stabilité du pays : avoir des forces islamistes, qui ne se reconnaissent plus dans le paysage politique et lancent des actions terroristes ou avoir une révolte des jeunes, une intifada jordanienne.

Le Jourdain : La maladie du roi est-elle un handicap pour la Jordanie ?

M. L. : Tout d'abord, je trouve très triste la maladie du roi et très courageuse la manière dont il l'affronte. Les Jordaniens l'ont eu à la tête du pays pendant une très longue période. C'est à la fois une chance et une malchance. Une chance parce que c'est un facteur de

stabilité : le roi jouait le rôle de père de la nation. En même temps, c'est une facilité : les gens se sont habitués à ce confort.

En réalité, ce n'est pas vraiment la maladie du roi qui pose problème, c'est le traité de paix. D'ailleurs n'y a-t-il pas une relation entre le traité de paix et la maladie ? Le roi Hussein a surpris les Jordaniens par la rapidité avec laquelle il a signé un traité de paix qui n'était certainement pas le meilleur que la Jordanie pouvait obtenir. Était-il pressé par le temps, sachant qu'il était malade et qu'il voulait laisser la paix à son peuple ? Si cela a été son calcul, je crois que ce n'était pas forcément le bon calcul.

Ce traité de paix n'a pas résolu les problèmes de la Jordanie, n'a pas apporté la prospérité qu'elle en attendait.

Propos recueillis par Yannick Lainé

(1) La Jordanie, de Marc Lavergne, éditions Karthala, 250 p. En prêt au CCF.

## L'homme en voie d'extinction

Moi qui n'ai pas connu les hommes, un roman de Jacqueline Harpman (1995), 267 p., édition Stock.

En prêt au Centre culturel français.

Elle n'a pas de nom. Personne n'y a jamais pensé. «La petite», c'est tout ce qu'on a trouvé pour la nommer. D'ailleurs, cela ne lui va pas si mal puisqu'elle est effectivement beaucoup plus jeune que ses 39 concubines, enfermées, comme elle, au fond d'une cave. Pourquoi, sont-elles là, sous l'œil et le fouet de gardiens muets qui leur fournissent à manger ? Aucune d'entre elles ne le sait, personne ne peut répondre aux questions incessantes de «la petite» qui n'a pas connu le monde d'avant.

Puis, soudain, le cri strident d'une alarme. C'est le moment du repas. Les gardiens s'enfuient aussitôt en laissant les clés dans la serrure de la cage. Commence pour ces 40 femmes une longue errance à la recherche de la vérité, d'autres humains, des restes du passé...

vers l'inconnu. Le monde qu'elles découvrent, ne donne que des morceaux de réponses à des questions qu'elles, ne cessent de s'accumuler. Mais le temps ne s'est pas arrêté et les femmes vieillissent. Le groupe se réduit à mesure des décès inévitables. «La petite» poursuit son chemin, de plus en plus seule, dans ce monde absurde et stérile qui est le sien et qu'elle a décidé d'adopter et de nous raconter. Nous lisons son récit comme le témoignage d'une époque à venir. Qui sait ? Catastrophe nucléaire, météorite géante, raz-de-marée, effet de serre ? Qui sait ? Ces interrogations finis-



sent pas agacer. Nous étions habitués à trouver des réponses et des solutions, nous sommes là confrontés à une suite infinie de mystères. Le malaise s'installe. Mi-fiction, mi-réalité, l'univers de Jacqueline Harpman nous entraîne dans les abîmes d'une nature humaine qui, pourtant, n'aime pas le vide.

Nous voici traqués comme des moutons en voie d'extinction : pas d'hommes, pas de fécondation, pas de descendance. L'histoire de l'humanité se termine-t-elle avec «la petite» qui s'applique à témoigner pour laisser une trace, comme une bouteille-S.O.S. dans un océan de solitude ?

Nous avions cru nous identifier à «la petite» et rêvé de sauver les hommes. Jacqueline Harpman puait notre orgueil confortable de lecteur. Il n'y a plus qu'à refermer son roman avec un terrible frisson d'impuissance.

Y. L.

Relations commerciales franco-jordanien

## Un flirt du bout des lèvres

Sur le sol hashémite, la présence française reste plus que jamais limitée. Peu rassurés par un processus de paix agonisant, les entrepreneurs hésitent à investir dans un pays économiquement dépendant. Au plus grand regret de l'État jordanien, lancé dans un ajustement structurel...

Avec un PIB de 1634

dollars par habitant, un taux de chômage évalué officiellement à 15% et une inflation à 6,5%, la Jordanie se situe sans ambiguïté dans la catégorie des pays sous-développés. Ne disposant pas de nappes pétrolières comme ses voisins irakien et saoudien, ni d'un pouvoir d'achat élevé, elle est plutôt mal partie pour exercer des échanges commerciaux avec la France. Pourtant, à y regarder de plus près, cette dernière est un partenaire de choix pour le royaume hashémite.

Bien sûr, on est encore loin de la relation privilégiée avec l'Irak, mais la France détient tout de même la sixième place. Ce flirt commercial, déficitaire de toute façon pour la Jordanie, est encore plus déséquilibré depuis la fin des années 1980, avec l'arrêt des ventes de phosphate. L'exportation vers la France (615 millions de francs en 1996) est dominée par les engrais (21 millions de francs). S'ensuivent loin derrière le textile (3 millions de francs), les produits animaux divers (3 millions) et les légumes frais (2 millions de francs).

Étouffement

Dans l'autre sens, les importations se répartissent à parts égales entre les produits alimentaires, les biens de consommation et les biens d'équipement. Cependant, ces derniers ont atterri en 1996 près de 60% de la moitié des ventes françaises, grâce à plusieurs contrats importants : Airbus, Centrale et sous-station électrique. Plus stables sont les importations de produits laitiers (136 millions) et les produits pharmaceutiques (33 millions).



Depuis l'arrêt des ventes de phosphate à la France à la fin des années 80, le déséquilibre commercial entre les deux pays s'est encore accentué.

Il existe également des projets de coopération dans le domaine des infrastructures. Deux grands groupes français, La Lyonnaise des Eaux et Vivendi, sont actuellement en compétition pour décrocher le marché de la gestion du réseau d'eau du Grand Amman. Dans le secteur des télécommunications, France Telecom fournit un tiers du réseau en téléphonie du pays. Enfin, la France devrait se joindre à la construction de nouvelles lignes de chemin de fer pour marchandises. «Il faut encore valoriser les secteurs porteurs de la Jordanie comme les produits miniers : c'est là tout notre travail», affirme

Christian Ponsot, conseiller économique et commercial à l'ambassade de France.

Vaste programme, quand on sait que l'implantation des entreprises dépend largement de la conjoncture politique de la région. Jusqu'à la fin des années 1980, la Jordanie profitait du conflit Iran-Irak pour s'imposer comme point de passage des marchandises vers l'Irak. La Guerre du Golfe et l'embargo imposé par l'ONU ont stoppé net cette situation de plaque tournante.

Autre handicap : la remise en cause du processus de paix avec Israël. La signature d'un accord de paix entre les deux

pays en Octobre 1994 avait excité l'intérêt des partenaires commerciaux potentiels, comme la France. Avec l'arrivée au pouvoir de Netanyahou en 1995, les principes du traité ont été tout simplement oubliés par le nouveau chef du gouvernement israélien. Les frontières avec la Palestine sont devenues étanches, freinant l'exportation des bananes et du ciment. «Toutes les conditions sont aujourd'hui réunies pour l'étouffement», prévient Christian Ponsot. Car le pays n'a aucune autonomie économique. L'absence de classe moyenne, véritable débouché pour la consommation intérieure, exclut

toute idée d'autarcie.

Pourtant, le conseiller affirme que la Jordanie est entrée dans son histoire économique moderne. L'État n'a fourni au début des années 1990 des efforts conséquents avec son plan d'ajustement structurel. Son but est de réduire la dette extérieure et l'inflation. Avec les encouragements du FMI, ces mesures ont permis, jusqu'à la crise actuelle, de développer les investissements étrangers.

Vol intellectuel

Par ailleurs, l'absence de propriété intellectuelle est un obstacle indéniable en Jordanie. Certes, il existe des lois, mais elles ne sont pas appliquées par l'administration quand elles vont à l'encontre des intérêts des producteurs locaux, autant dire souvent. Au bureau régional de Rhône-Poulenc, on en sait quelque chose. «Il existe bien une pression internationale, affirme le responsable du secteur pharmaceutique, mais les faits sont là, avec les dommages financiers importants qu'ils causent».

Mais la Jordanie ne pourra pas éternellement profiter du vol intellectuel : l'accord d'association signé avec l'Union Européenne en 1997 et l'entrée dans l'Organisation mondiale du commerce obligeront la justice à ouvrir les yeux. Elle devra notamment former des experts en faux, pour reconnaître par exemple une contrefaçon de pointe Bic. À partir de là, si les relations avec Israël se réchauffent, l'embargo sur l'Irak s'achève, les investissements français pourront peut-être progresser. Inch'Allah.

Antoine Marette



# The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Adzazi

## Pan-Arab Games update

### Kuwait to boycott the games

DOHA (The Star)—During the 7th Arab Football Cup in Doha, Sheikh Ahmad Al Sabah, the president of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee, made a shock announcement. If Iraq participates in the next Pan Arab Games, then Kuwait will not attend.

He assured that the good relations between Jordan and Kuwait would not be affected, if the boycott does in fact take place. He said that if Iraq were to pull out of the games, then Kuwait would be happy to send a big delegation of athletes.

### Jordan out of Arab Cup despite Fokasheer eating Mansaf

DOHA (The Star)—Jordan was eliminated from the first round of the 7th Arab Football Cup, after losing the decisive match against Qatar 0-2. Jordan won their first match against Libya 2-1.

The results were partly expected, due to the mismanagement of the Yugoslavian coach Fokasheer, who critics say played many players out of position.

Fokasheer ate mansaf before the game—but the old adage of 'if you eat the local food, all will go well,' did not materialize. Neither did it gain the respect of the players.

In the end, however, the mistakes were made by the players on the pitch, and only the players should be blamed. Greater efforts are needed if Jordan is to hold onto the Pan Arab Games title.

### Floodlights, at last in Al Petra Stadium

AMMAN (The Star)—Al Petra stadium, the second most



Not wanting to get his hands dirty may have been Fokasheer's biggest problem



Amman International Stadium in transition

### New seats for Amman International Stadium

AMMAN (The Star)—Al Hussein Youth City management has started to enlarge the capacity of Amman International Stadium. The stadium will witness the opening and the closing ceremonies of the next Pan Arab Games.

The enlargement of the stadium will bring the first class seating capacity up to 6000. The enlargement will also include the official/VIP area, with more seats for journalists and guests.

### Men's Handball team on a losing streak

CAIRO (The Star)—The Jordanian Men's Handball team lost their first match against Bahrain 28-21, during the first Arab Handball Cup, which started in Cairo this week.

Despite the defeat, the Jordanian performance keeps on improving under the supervision of the Iraqi Coach, Thafar Al Sabah.

We hope that the Jordanian Handball team will get things right before the Pan Arab Games next year.



Jordan's Mens Handball team, beaten but not down

# A life of speedy ascension—from shy Dee Dee to flamboyant FloJo

By Julie Cart

FEW HAD any inkling of it, but Florence Delorez Griffith Joyner—the fabulous FloJo—was painfully shy and deeply insecure. Underneath her skin-tight running suits and her lavishly manicured nails lived a little girl who stoically bore the taunts of other children and resolved to show the world that, some day, she would live her dreams.

Griffith Joyner had wild, unlikely dreams growing up in the Jordan Downs housing projects in the Watts section of Los Angeles. Her visions of international fame and high accomplishment seemed as fantastic as they were unrealistic for a girl with 10 brothers and sisters in a family supported by a divorced mother.

But little Dee Dee, as she was called, refused to give up her aspirations, even as she was ridiculed by others, even as adults implored her to rein in her longings.

No one could convince Florence that she would not be the artist, beautician, poet and designer that she saw herself being. One day in school, her teacher asked her what she wanted to be.

"Everything," she said. "I want to be everything."

At first, she made the mistake of announcing to other children what a fabulous life she was preparing for. When they laughed and made her cry, she learned to keep to herself, to hold her tears until she got home. I learned to cry when I got home," Griffith Joyner told the Los Angeles Times in 1988. "I learned that when you try to do right and you try to please everybody, they will still laugh at you and they will still talk about you."

Florence, who always had a sense of being different, decided early on not to be ashamed of her uniqueness, but to make it her signature. She went to school in all manner of

unusual dress. She wore different colored socks. She twisted her hair into elaborate piled-up styles. Dissatisfied with the limited spectrum available in her mother's nail polish, Florence mixed crushed crayons into clear polish to create her own shades.

Because her mother did not allow the Griffith children to roam freely in the dangerous neighborhood, the brothers and sisters became their own, tight play unit. That meant Florence played with her brothers under their rules. She played basketball and football. They had foot races in the street. They had hand-stand contests. She won.

Florence played with her brothers and their friends until they were reminded that she was a girl and not welcome. Undaunted, she spent hours in her mother's closet, trying on dresses and stockings and oversized shoes, acting out her future famous life in her fine clothes.

On paper, Florence designed gowns and delicate dresses that she would wear to the fabulous parties that, in her dreams, she attended. When the children visited their father, who lived in the Mojave Desert, they returned with exaggerated diction. Robert Griffith drilled his children in "proper" English.

Florence always spoke softly and distinctly, using her meticulous enunciation to disguise a slight lisp. Other children made fun of the fancy way she spoke, interpreting her efforts to better herself as meaning she thought herself better than others. She was branded a snobby girl, and her shyness would forever be seer



The late Florence Griffith-Joyner out on a run with President Bill Clinton

as aloofness.

Florence filed these hurts along with the others and saved the pain until she needed it, when it became her motivation and inspiration. It drove her as she competed in track and field.

As before, others underestimated her ability and the scope of her achievement. She had speed to burn and could not harness it, she said, until she was a sprinter in downy tracks, starting blocks. With a start, she was a different person. Only the middle-aged and the old were not going to make the first run of a sprinter.

She was a few crumb positions on a relay team—but no one saw in her what she knew were there. A gold medal and a world record. Her persistence in the face of what others viewed as tightly limited ability was remarkable.

As her friends made the 1980 Olympic team and traveled in Europe, Florence stayed home, punishing her body in training. She would do it her own way. She would show them. "I have been running since I was 7," she said. "I was trying to restructure the way my body was made instead of trying to master the way I ran. I would get so frustrated with my starts in practice that I would just cry. When I ran, I

wouldn't even try to get out of the blocks, I would just run."

Eventually, coaches discovered that Griffith Joyner's athletic gift was not to be altered. It was hers, intact, as she had always seen it in her dreams. Once freed to be herself, Florence flourished.

Finally secure in her ability, she transformed into her alter ego, FloJo.

The little girl flew out of the closet and flounced about in her grown-up clothes. If perfect elocution could obscure a speech impediment, a uniform she described as an "athletic negligee" might distract from her sub-par start. If sprinters were not to wear their fingernails long, lest they interfere with the mechanics of the start, then FloJo would cultivate hers to an extravagant length and decorate them.

The outlandish designs she had scribbled on bits of paper when she was child were carried over into the figure-revealing outfits Griffith Joyner introduced to the world in 1988. She was a sensation, both in how she ran and how she looked doing it. Most commentators were speechless. Those who weren't echoed the caty comments she'd been hearing all her life.

Her accomplishments allowed Griffith Joyner to tune out the negatives. She had done it, just as she always said she would, and, at last, she

allowed herself a prolonged I-just-did-it moment. She still holding that

As she was so gifted a person, Griffith Joyner was a complicated person. There was little Dee Dee, bit-race. Really, coaches told her, you are not going to make it. At Cal State Northridge, Griffith Joyner did not even make the first run of a sprinter.

Even after she had set world records and won multiple gold medals, there were still some people who tried to change the way she ran. "I'm not going to change. The world record is not going to change me," she said. "I'm not going to allow people to change me."

"My family has always believed in me and now all those people are saying they knew I could do it. Funny, I never heard that before. I was always the one who knew I could do it. I prayed for it. I worked so hard for it. I knew one day this type of thing could happen."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

# Football Roundup

## English Premier League match reports

Aston Villa (1) Derby County (0)  
England international Paul Merson put Villa five points clear at the top of the table with a well-taken goal in the 15th minute when he beat the offside trap and slotted the ball inside the left-hand post. Villa, now have 17 points from seven games, and have not started the season so well for decades.

Charlton Athletic (1) Coventry City (1)  
Struggling Coventry picked up their first points away from home through a diving headed goal from Noel Whelan in the 69th minute but Andy Hunt equalized for Charlton five minutes later with a curling shot.

Chelsea (2) Middlesbrough (0)  
Middlesbrough's Gary Pallister deflected

a cross-cum-shot from Brian Laudrup into his own net in the 46th minute to put Chelsea ahead. The Londoners dominated most of the rest of the match before scoring three points with an 81st minute chip from Italian forward Gianfranco Zola.

Everton (0) Blackburn Rovers (0)  
Blackburn's Swedish international Martin Dahlin was sent off in the 73rd minute after a clash with Marco Materazzi. The game was littered with bookings. Everton

threw everything forward but failed to pick up their first home victory of the season in a largely dull match.

Newcastle (2) Nottingham Forest (0)  
England captain Alan Shearer scored in the 11th and 39th minutes, the second a penalty, but United were made to work hard for their three points.

Sheffield Wednesday (1) Arsenal (0)  
Sheffield Wednesday snatched a surprise victory with a spectacular winner from Lee Briscoe but the game was marred by the behaviour of Italian striker Paolo di Canio who floored referee Paul Alcock after he showed him the red card for violent conduct.

Toonham Hotspur (3) Leeds United (3)  
Leeds were heading towards a 3-2 win after goals from Gunnar Halle (4th), Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (26th) and Clive Wijnald (61st). But a dramatic late header from Sol Campbell helped Spurs grab a point after a comeback from 3-1 down. Ramon Vega (14th) and Steffen Iversen (71st) got the other Spurs goals.

Liverpool (0) Manchester United (2)  
A terrific win in the opening match of the week. The goals were scored by Dennis Irwin from a penalty shot in the 17th minute of the first half. Scholes added the second in the 79th minute.

French 1st Division match reports  
Girondins Bordeaux (4) Rennes (0)  
Bordeaux answered critics who said they were wobbling at home after being held 1-1 by Rapid Vienna in the first leg of their UEFA Cup tie last week. "We had to make ourselves respected at our ground," coach Elie Baup said ahead of the away leg.

Monaco (3) Le Havre (0)  
Croatian striker Robert Spehar impressed coach Jean Tigana with a fine performance in an unaccustomed playmaking role, while young midfielder Francisco Da Costa celebrated his first call to the Portuguese national team.

Lorient (1) Metz (1)  
Metz ended their league goal drought after 622 minutes—eight short of seven games—with Yugoslav striker Nenad Jestrovic's equaliser after veteran Ali Bouffia scored his fourth goal of the season for the

top flight newcomers.

Nancy (0) Olympique Lyon (0)  
Lyon missed suspended four-goal Swiss striker Marco Grassi as Nancy had the better of a tight match.

RC Lens (2) Nantes (4)  
Lens coach Daniel Leclercq got the fighting performance he wanted from his players following some poor results, but only after they gave away two bad goals in half an hour and left themselves with an uphill battle with two men sent off.

Strasbourg (2) Montpellier (1)  
Strasbourg scored as many goals as they had in their previous six matches, climbing five places, and managed to shut out Montpellier's Ivorian striker Ibrahim Bakayoko who is still waiting to hear if he is moving to England's Everton.

Sochaux (1) Paris St Germain (0)  
Sochaux kicked off as bottom club with one point from their opening match of the season and appeared to make matters worse by having Eric Boniface sent off for a bad tackle from behind on midfielder Yann Lachuer. But PSG paid for their poor scoring form when Bernard Lama handed the home side a winner.

Toulouse (0) AJ Auxerre (0)  
Toulouse went a second game without conceding a goal after letting in 14 in their first five and Auxerre captain Gerald Baticle missed the clearest chance of match in 89th minute.

Bastia (0) Olympique Marseille (2)  
The referee booked Bastia defender Patrick Valery and Marseille striker Patrice Canina to the opening minute for tussling off the ball, setting the tone for good control of a potentially heated match well won by the visitors.

Italian Serie A match reports  
Cagliari (5) Sampdoria (0)  
Sierra Leone forward Mohamed Kallon scored twice as newly-promoted Cagliari turned on the style against a Sampdoria side short of ideas. The visitors scored the match with nine men after Brazilian forward Cane and Yugoslav defender Nenad Sakic were sent off.

Empoli (1) Inter Milan (2)  
Inter were forced to fight back after

Christian Bucchi had given the Tuscans a surprise lead on his Serie A debut. Empoli ended the match with nine men and without a goalkeeper. Midfielder Pierpaolo Bisoli had to play in goal in the closing minutes after Matteo Sereni was dismissed.

Parma (2) Lazio (2)  
The match was suspended near the end of the first half after tear gas canisters were thrown on to the pitch by visiting supporters. Japanese Hidetoshi Nakata scored Parma's second goal. Lazio's Roberto Mancini was sent off for dissent.

Piacenza (2) Vicenza (0)  
Midfielder Renato Buso gave Piacenza the lead in this early season relegation clash. Striker Davide Dionigi finished Vicenza off from the penalty spot after Giovanni Stroppa had been brought down.

Parma (1) Juventus (0)  
Seven players were booked in this stormy encounter between the champions and one of their chief pretenders. One of those cautioned was Dino Baggio, scorer of the scrappy but decisive goal just after halftime. The result, and the scorer was a carbon copy of Parma's defeat of Juve in the 1995 UEFA Cup final.

AC Milan (1) Fiorentina (3)  
Fiorentina, with a hat-trick from Gabriel Batistuta, dominated this top-of-the-table match. Besides a late Oliver Bierhoff penalty, Milan's only real chance came in the 47th minute when, down 2-0, striker Maurizio Ganz's close-range shot was just cleared from the line by Czech defender Tomas Ropel.

AS Roma (2) Venezia (0)  
Roma bounced back from a disappointing away draw last week at Empoli with a solid performance from centre-forward Marco Delvecchio, who scored both goals to help his chances of winning a regular first-team spot.

Udinese (2) Salernitana (0)  
Provincial club Udinese con-

tinued to soar thanks to Brazilian striker Amoroso, now joint top scorer with Batistuta with five goals in three games. Newly-promoted Salernitana, despite an attractive game, are still winless in the top-flight.

Bari (0) Bologna (0)  
Bologna were fortunate to pick up their first point of the season as their keeper Francesco Antonioli was forced to make several fine saves to keep strikers Phil Masinga of South Africa and Gianluca Zambrotta from scoring.

German 1st Division results  
Schalke 04 (0) Bayer Leverkusen (1)  
B. Dortmund (2) VfL Wolfsburg (1)  
SC Freiburg (2) MSV Duisburg (2)  
B. M. Gladbach (2) VfB Stuttgart (3)  
Kaiserslautern (2) VfL Bochum (3)  
Hamburg SV (1) Hansa Rostock (0)  
Bayern Munich (1) W. Bremen (0)



Hassan Salah shows his determination for Bayern Munich



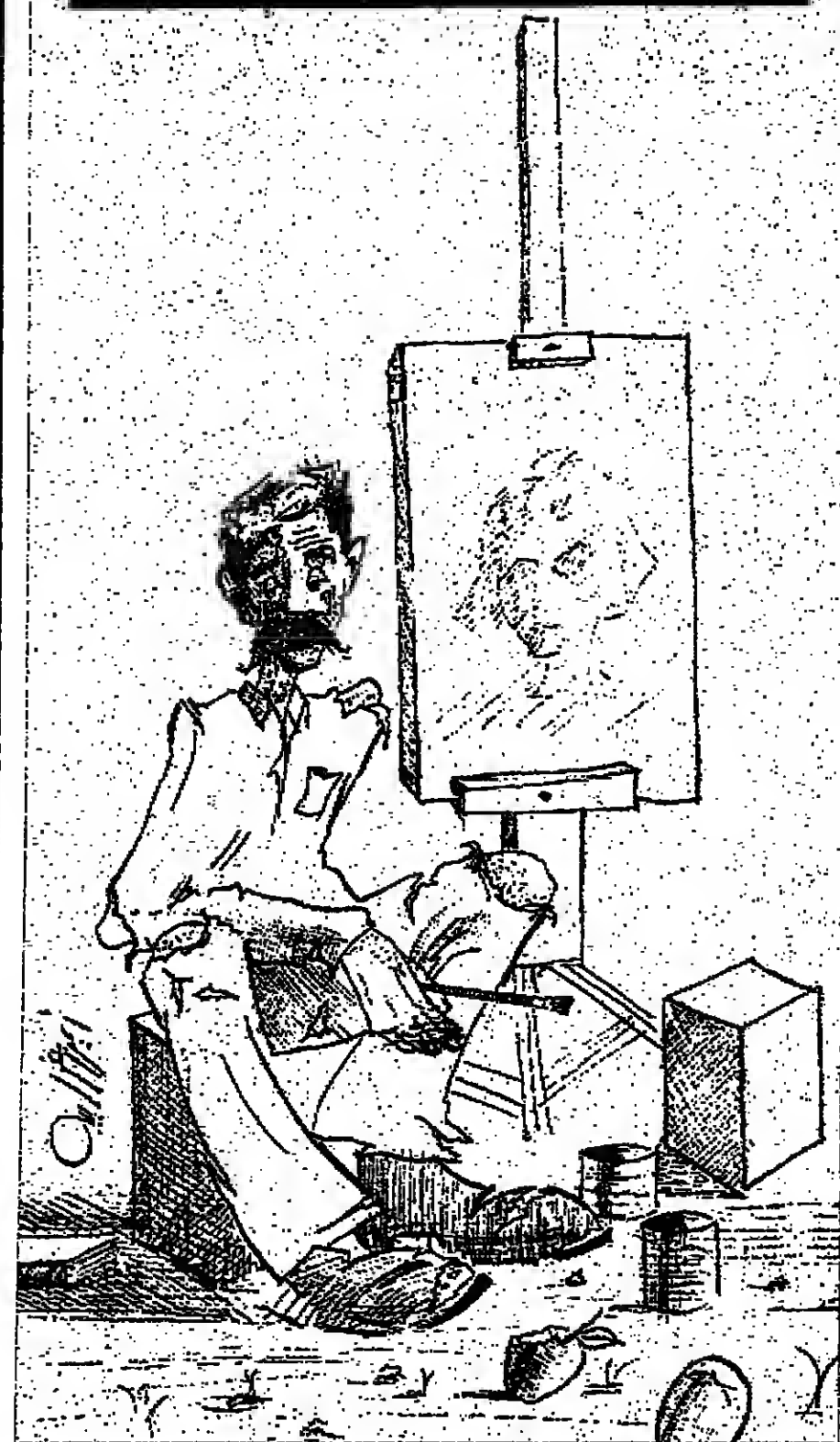
Arsenal captain, Tony Adams, keeping his eyes on the ball







## ART



# She eats celebrities for lunch

By Paul Brownfield

HOLLYWOOD—Sandra Bernhard began her career in 1975 on opeo-mike night at Ye Little Club in Beverly Hills, a now-defunct place that she describes as "this little bar where a lot of older, lushy Beverly Hills types would hang out." At the time, Bernhard was a manicurist, working in a Beverly Hills saloon called Cia, with the occasional celebrity client—Dyan Cannon, Jaclyn Smith, Victoria Principal.

Knowing what we know about her today, it is highly appropriate that Bernhard should have once spent her days manicuring the likes of Victoria Principal. Then, as now, she got cozy with show business' pretty people, took good notes and read them back to us, to darkly comic effect. Celebrity obsession, in fact, has been a Bernhard specialty for several decades—long before sycophantic, self-parodying media outlets like E! Entertainment Television came along to take the fun out of mocking stardom.

When Bernhard tells us the details of her friendships with Courtney Love or Madonna, for instance, she's satirizing our need to know about these people as much as the stars themselves, according to the *LA Times-Washington Post News Service*.

"But I wouldn't call my work mocking," says Bernhard, who is warming up for the Broadway run of her latest one-woman cabaret, "I'm Still Here...Damn It!"

"It's a strange combination of homage and weird respect and also kind of being on the outside looking in. Even though I'm in the business, I don't feel like I'm a part of it." It is a late summer Friday, and Bernhard's publicist has suggested folding this inter-



Sandra Bernhard, in a Studio City restaurant, says her idea of comedy comes more out of left field than traditional stand-up material.

view into lunch and an afternoon of errands Bernhard has to run—to the shoe guy, to the photo development place to pick up pictures of a recent trip to Morocco, to Whole Foods grocery store.

The interview seems the errand for which Bernhard has the least energy. Between bites of a chicken breast sandwich, she answers questions about her career and personal life, but with a slight air of boredom. Bernhard has a way of making you feel as though you're back in high school, trying to ingratiate yourself with the coolest chick in class. What her body

language (and eventually yours) says is this: It's an empty task, this interview, ultimately meaningless, but we'll live, honey.

Of course, for Bernhard, 43, there are more important things to tend to these days than her next club show. Waiting at home in North Hollywood is her 2-month-old daughter, Cicely Yashin, a subject about which she's protective.

"That's why I kept (the pregnancy) private," she says of her decision to become a mother. "I didn't want people to misinterpret it as a publicity stunt."

In "I'm Still Here," some of

Bernhard's "most withering commentary is reserved for cheap publicity stunts—specifically, the cottage industry that is celebrity death. She takes off on Elton John's remake of "Candle in the Wind" following the death of Princess Diana, and the benefit album for the late Gianni Versace (with proceeds going to fashion victims around the world, she notes).

Her breakout performance would not come on stage, however, but in film, playing an obsessive fan and cohort of Robert Pupkin (Robert De Niro) in Martin Scorsese's

1982 film, "The King of Comedy." The role seemed written specifically for her, tapping as it did into her ability to turn celebrity stalking into performance art. In the end, Bernhard nearly stole the film with a scene in which she tortures a bound and gagged Jerry Lewis. "It was way ahead of its time," Bernhard says of the film.

"Many people have done films about that subject since then. People didn't understand it. They didn't understand obsession (with) celebrity. It predicted that whole phenomenon."

# Four ways to look at Van Gogh

By Paul Richard

WASHINGTON—He was prolific and protean: a scholar and a sufferer, an art-world pro and a destitute outsider, an evangelical bohemian, both sordid and sublime. There are as many ways to see his pictures as there are ways to read his life. Some are stolid brown and gray. Others seem to detonate in a shrapnel burst of color, as if his world had begun to fly apart. Some are piercingly original. Others closely imitate other artists' work.

Apparent in these paintings—from "Van Gogh's Van Gogh: Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam"—are the combustible components that he mixed in his art, states the *LA Times-Washington Post News Service*.

## 1. The Painter of Peasant Life

Van Gogh painted among peasants,

and in some part of his being he was one himself, as burdened and as earthy as a rustic out of Brueghel, as soiled and as coarse.

His studio in Nuenen, Netherlands, was between the sewer and the dung heap. His shoes were broken, dirty things, and his mattress was straw. His poverty, his politics, his faith and his aesthetics bound him to the lowly. Van Gogh had preached the Gospel to peat-diggers and weavers, and had knelt in their mud huts, but his manners were not saintly. He smelled of wine and cheap tobacco. He got belligerent when drunk. He was really rather scary.

Van Gogh couldn't help but notice that his parents shrank away from him as if he were a "foul beast." His father and his neighbors thought him ready for the madhouse. His underclothes were ruins. When proper ladies spurned him, he turned to two-franc whores.

"One must paint the peasants as if one were one of them," he wrote. The colors of his early works are those of the earth.

## 2. The Collecting Connoisseur

Van Gogh was a sophisticate. He was multilingual, widely traveled, well connected and well read. He'd studied Greek and Latin, and wrote powerfully and fluently in English, French and Dutch. His ties to the art market could scarcely have been stronger. Three of van Gogh's uncles were dealers by profession, as was his brother Theo, and for nearly seven years he had been employed in the picture trade himself in Paris and in London, in Brussels, Belgium, and The Hague, Netherlands.

Van Gogh was a collector. First, he purchased British prints. "I own have a good thousand sheets of English (wood engravings)," he wrote in 1882. Then,

with Theo, he bought graphics from Japan. In 1887, he arranged a public art show—not of his own paintings, but of flatly patterned, boldly colored Ukiyoe woodblock prints.

His vast originality obscures his many borrowings. He copied the Japanese. "The Courtesan" (1887) imitates a Keisai Eisen print he'd discovered on the cover of a Paris magazine. "Still Life With Carafe and Lemons" (1887) is reminiscent of Cezanne. Van Gogh also copied Rembrandt, and, in 1889, Delacroix's "Pisa."

He borrowed to the end. "Daubigny's Garden" (1890), a landscape he completed the month before he killed himself, bows in two directions—toward Daubigny's own landscapes and toward Claude Monet's.

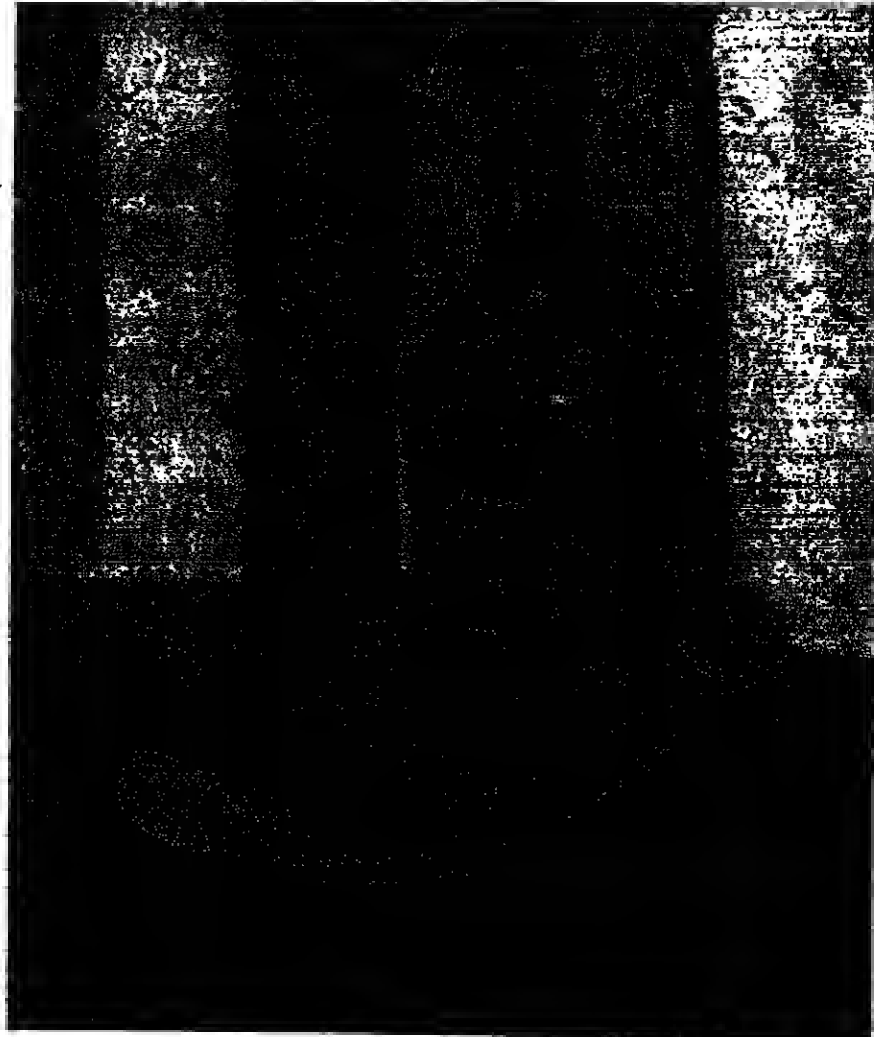
## 3. The Palette Explodes

When van Gogh moved to Paris, in March 1886, he seemed to have caught fire. He was suddenly a colorist. The incandescent canvases on which his reputation rests followed his conversion. He painted them all in the last four years of his life.

Before, he'd kept to middle tones, seeking "the gray harmony." Now, he turned to flaming reds, blues, oranges and yellows. Before, he'd practiced shading. Now, he saw it was "impossible" to deal at the same time with saturated hues and subtle tonal values. "One has to choose," he wrote, and what he chose was color.

He used little hits of colored yarn to help compose his color chords. He no longer mixed his hues when he put them on his palette. Henceforth, he built his images of rhythmic, rhyming paint strokes, markings that his brush put down one color at a time.

"I shall be an obstinate colorist," he wrote. "The color laws," he said, "are unutterably beautiful." In "Self-Portrait With Felt Hat" (1887-1888), a force field of color reverberates around his head like a ringing halo. "I shall exaggerate the fairness of the hair," he wrote, "arrive at tones of orange, chrome, pale yellow. Behind the head—instead of painting the ordinary wall of the shabby apart-



ment, I shall paint infinity." "The painter of the future," he wrote in 1888, "will be a colorist the like of which has never yet been seen."

## 4. The Shadow

Van Gogh pulled the trigger among yellow fields of wheat on July 27, 1890. He died two days later in his brother's arms.

"Vast fields of wheat under troubled skies" glow in his last paintings. His drawing and his coloring (with van Gogh, the two are one) were still as strong as ever, and his long-neglected work at last was gaining notice, when he seized these final images. Their yellows shine like heated gold. Beyond the warming sunlight, the chilling dark descends.

He long had known that shadow. His letters had for years voiced his intense suffering, his "overwhelming boredom," his loneliness and loathing. He wrote: "It is only when I stand painting before my easel that I feel in any way alive."

His episodes of madness had been

growing more acute. When seized by his attacks he had put a razor to his ear lobe, or swallowed clods of dirt, or turpentine and paints. Just days before his suicide he felt his life attacked, he wrote, "at its very root."

In "Wheat Field With a Reaper" (1889), Van Gogh had pictured death "on the point of smiling." "I see in this reaper—a vague figure, falling away for all he's worth in the midst of the heat to finish his task—I see in him the image of death: in the sense that humanity might be the wheat that he is reaping," he wrote in September 1889.

"But there is no sadness in this death: this one takes place in broad daylight with a sun flooding everything with a light of pure gold. It's all-yellow, except for a line of purple hills. A pale and golden yellow."

I find it odd that I saw it like that through the iron bars of a cell."

In the end, van Gogh welcomed dying. The black and jagged birds in "Wheat Field With Crows," his final painting, predict what soon would come.



Vincent van Gogh's "Still Life With Carafe and Lemons," painted in 1887, is reminiscent of Paul Cezanne's work; van Gogh also copied Rembrandt and Delacroix.